

Understanding the Contemporary Value of
Past Methods of Producing Theatre: Towards
a Tripartite Approach to
Venue – Performance – Document

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ABSTRACT/SUMMARY

This thesis evaluates the contemporary relevance of recent historical relationships between alternative theatre and its venues. It examines these relationships through what I term – following Pearson (2010) – a ‘tripartite’ approach to venue, performance and the archival documents that record them. The research engages in a practice-based methodology that aims to reconstruct such relationships using the performance history of Chapter Arts Centre, Cardiff, in the 1970s as a major case study.

In Chapter One the thesis draws on literature from three distinct fields in theatre and performance studies that have each addressed different facets of the relationship between venue, performance and document: the debate on the relationship between performance and archive (Taylor 2003, Reason 2003 and 2006, Roms 2013), the discussion on re-enactment (esp. Schneider 2001 and 2011) and literature on site and “ghosting” (esp. Carlson 2003; Taylor 2003). I argue that the available literature does currently not consider sufficiently the historical role that the venue played as both a physical site and a producing facility for the performance work that happened within it.

To explore further the relationship between venue-performance-document, I turn in Chapter Two to case studies of recent projects that have examined this in reference to Chapter Arts Centre and its contemporaries, Arnolfini (Bristol) and the CCA (Glasgow). Chapter Three offers an account of the performance history of Chapter Arts Centre in the 1970s, based on archival research and oral history interviews, to examine the relationship between the venue’s innovative residency programme and its visiting performance companies. Chapter Four is a reflective account of my three practice-based experiments, in which I develop and test my ‘tripartite’ approach, drawing on literature on embodied historiographic practice (Taylor 2003; 2006) and adopting a form of “generative” and “active” archive (Lepecki 2010).

To conclude I reflect on the value for today of thus reaching back to former approaches and policies, suggesting that the tripartite reconstruction of the three elements of a venue’s past offers a transferable model with which to communicate a vital aspect of performance history.

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There is an accompanying Photobook and USB stick that contains a film and sound files.

FOREWORD

It is September 2012, and I begin a collaborative doctoral research project with Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff. It is a place and a building I am unfamiliar with. I enter the archive room and stand amongst Chapter's past, packed away in boxes. I do not know what I might uncover here. I have expectations of Chapter's past holding something special for me to uncover and reveal. Perhaps I will discover an object from an exhibition, or a prop from a past theatre show.

But I find no such things; no objects whatsoever are stored here. Boxes precariously stacked on top of one another are labelled with numbers and titles, and inside are sometimes reams of papers, sometimes only a single sheet. And a number of the boxes are strangely empty, albeit still labelled, expression of a hope perhaps that something of that label would be found, somewhere, sometime.

I sit in this windowless and almost airless room, still living in hope of what I might find hidden away in these documents. I have always had a fantasy of being a forensic scientist or a detective, and I can finally put this into action as I dip in and out of boxes, trying to find connections and stories from a bygone era. I find a box that I am instantly pulled in by; it contains the minute books from Chapter's earliest years, the first of which from 1971 is handwritten. There is something about seeing and touching the writing of someone that makes this so much more personal. I feel like I am reading a diary, hidden away in a secret room filled with someone else's past.

I get to know the materials I find. I sift through them, I decipher them, I add to them, I play with them. The materials start to feel like they are my materials. They are offering me new insights every time I look at them. I feel like I am getting to know performances I had never seen with my own eyes.

Box 55 is my treasured find. Its label reads “The Pip Simmons Theatre Group, *Woyzeck* 1977”. I take out a bulging folder, and the archival material it contains is rich and varied. I have never heard of the Pip Simmons group, but they were exciting and challenging; this is clear from the reviews and the photos I pull from this archive. I am drawn into their world. And I am inspired to make live work that somehow evokes what they were doing, and perhaps more importantly, what Chapter permitted them to do.

I piece the documents together, in a kind of re-enactment approach. But as I continue this process I realise that I am not making a ‘re’- version at all. I am responding to the materials, but what I am making is something new within a building that has not changed in essence from the time of Pip Simmons’s original work.

I hit a bump in the research. Chapter is going through considerable changes, and there is not the time or money to allow my research to take place in the building.

My practice – so concerned with the venue as a host and catalyst of pioneering and progressive theatre – is no longer possible to use in the ways I envisaged. Instead it is the document itself, in its openness and ability to be displaced, that I explore; it is tested in a new place, a place in which it does not belong.

INTRODUCTION

PART 1: FRAMING THE RESEARCH

0.1 THE PARAMETERS OF THE RESEARCH

This thesis explores the recent historical relationships between performance works by the so-called ‘alternative’ theatre companies in the UK and the artistic venues that housed them in the 1970s. It evaluates the contemporary relevance of these relationships and the approaches to producing and presenting theatre they imply. It aims to offer a model for how venues may reach back to these former approaches to inform their work today. Examining the venue’s physical site, the past performances it hosted and its archived documents in what I term – following Pearson (2010) – a ‘tripartite’ approach, this research engages in a practice-based methodology that aims to reconstruct and reactivate past relationships between venue and performance.

Such a focus on the relationship between venues and their approaches to producing and presenting alternative theatre is one that, I will argue, has so far been little considered in scholarship. I will address this gap through a major case study of Chapter Arts Centre, a multi-form arts venue established in Cardiff in 1971 and a key location for the development of innovative theatre practices in Britain since the 1970s. This research focuses on Chapter’s theatre programming policy in the mid-to late 1970s, particularly on a residency scheme offered to theatre companies; launched in 1977, the scheme aimed to bring about a collaborative and symbiotic relationship between venue and company in the staging of performance work.

Two specific aspects of this case study approach should be clarified from the outset. Firstly, the focus of this thesis lies firmly on the theatre aspect of Chapter. Whilst Chapter has always housed visual artists, filmmakers, printmakers and artists and makers of many other disciplines, theatre was, I wish to argue, central to its operations in the 1970s. It is the particular challenge that alternative theatre and its formal demands presented to the venue and the way

in which it housed performance work at the time that is of particular interest to this research. The experimentations of alternative theatre work demanded a different relationship to a venue; and in turn the venue also changed the format of the work.

Secondly, in my practice-as-research experimentations, the operations of Chapter in the 1970s will be compared with a more contemporary approach through a smaller case study on Camden People's Theatre, a venue in London that opened in 1994 with the purpose of producing and hosting experimental work. This comparison helps to illuminate the specificities of Chapter's approaches to housing performance, and to evaluate relationships between venues and experimental performance work more broadly.

This thesis is therefore above all a methodological enquiry into approaches to and the significance of examining the relationship between a venue, its performance history and its archived documents. Moreover, it is developing a potentially transferable methodology for other venues to engage with their past approaches in order to inform their producing theatre for today. The research thereby aims to extend beyond the initial case study and be adopted by other institutions who are interested in understanding their own theatrical or wider artistic past. Furthermore, in establishing an understanding of historical relationships between a venue and the performances it housed, I hope to offer a more nuanced understanding of recent theatre history – a history that cannot be understood, I wish to argue, without understanding the context and conditions in which work was presented.

The tripartite methodological approach to venue–performance–document¹ I have developed is adapted from Mike Pearson, who applies the term when discussing the work of Clifford McLucas, a fellow company member of former Welsh theatre company Brith Gof. According to Pearson, McLucas argued that Brith Gof's site-specific works used a 'tripartite'

¹ From now on, when I mention the tripartite approach, I refer to the three elements: 'Venue – Performance – Document'.

approach by making performance, place and public act together as agents to create meaning (Pearson 2010: 37). I have applied a similar tripartite method, only I have replaced the element of the ‘public’ with that of the ‘archive’ or ‘document’ as a kind of historical witnesses, examining the relationship between venue, performance and document and looking to see if the three elements can act together to create a new understanding of recent historical alternative performance work. The archive, in this instance, as a collection of documents helps us to understand theatre histories as the ‘public’ of past performance is no longer available and has been replaced by the archival document (which here also includes eyewitness accounts as well as recorded media). I will argue that the examination of the tripartite relationship between performance, venue and archive advances our knowledge of the historical events that were thus documented. Moreover, my tripartite approach uses Practice-as-Research methodologies; and an integral element to the practice experiments is the adoption of what André Lepecki summarises as an ‘[...] active (rather than reactive) and generative (rather than imitative) approach to “historical material”’ (2010: 29 – 30). Practice-as-Research, coupled with the tripartite approach, I hope to demonstrate, has the capacity to not simply be a reaction to and imitation of past materials, but to actively produce new knowledge that would not otherwise be communicated. This, I suggest, renders historical material ‘experiential’ and opens it up for evaluation.

The term “experiential” is taken from Diana Taylor (2003; 2006), who argues that performative acts can make the past into something felt and experienced in the present. According to Taylor, ‘[...] embodied practices make the “past” available as a political resource in the present by simultaneously enabling several complicated, multilayered processes’ (2006: 68). I suggest that the tripartite approach uses such a multi-layered process that not only brings the relationship between the three constituents of a venue’s history together, but does so through a mode of reconstruction. The term “reconstruction” is contested within the field of

performance; as Pearson remarks about Stan's Cafe's 1999 restaging of Impact Theatre Cooperative's *The Carrier Frequency* (1984), the work featured '[...] not acts of reconstruction, but of recontextualization. They stand *for* the past, *in* the present' (as cited in Babbage 2000: 98). Nonetheless, I wish to adopt the term "reconstruction" as the most appropriate description of my approach: to take elements of the venue's history and reconstruct the relationship between them into new methodological enquiries that allow me to examine the recent historical relationship between venue and performance.

By undertaking such a reconstruction through Practice-as-Research I have been interested to see what new insights might be revealed that seek to both embody the past performance events of the venue, and perhaps, more importantly, reactivate former approaches to making, or policies of presenting such works. And I am using Chapter's performance history and policies of the 1970s to help me to do so.

The launch of Chapter's ground-breaking residency scheme in 1977 was offered to the experimental British company, The Pip Simmons Theatre Group. In situ for 4 weeks, they made and presented a perambulatory and interactive version of Georg Büchner's *Woyzeck* in and around the venue's spaces. The work will serve as a major theatrical case study for my research. As the first theatre piece to be made under the new residency initiative, it signifies the venue's shift in its relationship to visiting theatre companies, the work made and to the relationship the venue and performances established with its audience. The policy had a significant impact on the development of alternative theatre more widely at the time, yet this is not something that is widely acknowledged within academic literature. My aim is to test if through Practice-as-Research (PaR) a space can be opened up in which to reflect on or to disseminate further the relevance of former policies for today's theatre/venue/performance climate.

This research project was initiated in 2012. Initially, funding from the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) was established for a researcher to work with Chapter's archive and examine past strategies of audience engagement, especially with regards to experimental theatre practice. The AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award was conceived between Chapter's then Artistic Director, Janek Alexander, and performance scholar, Heike Roms, from Aberystwyth University, who has led a large research project of her own on the history of performance art in Wales, *'It was forty years ago today' – Locating the History of Performance Art in Wales 1965–1979*.² The CDA followed an earlier research initiative, which was set up in 2008 to coincide with Chapter's fortieth anniversary celebrations and was led by Professor Stephen Lacey from the University of Glamorgan. The result of that earlier project was an initial trawl through Chapter's archive, leading to a first catalogue of the stored materials.³ But the project was not taken forward for a variety of reasons, and instead Alexander and Roms established the AHRC-CDA doctoral project, to which I was appointed in 2012.

During the early stages of the CDA, due to unforeseen circumstances, Janek Alexander departed Chapter, and liaison for the project was handed to a different member of staff. This coincided with a change of strategic priorities for Chapter. As a result, the arts centre was unable to support my Practice-as-Research research enquiries in the way initially envisaged. It was therefore necessary for the project's focus and aims to change. Without a public platform on which to present work and engage with Chapter's audiences, a substantial examination into audience development strategies became impossible. I have repositioned the project therefore: it now focuses not only on the history of Chapter as a specific venue but on artistic venues more broadly, examining the continuing relevance of past policies and practices by employing a practice-based approach that brings together the venue, its archive and its performance

² See: Heike Roms (2011) <http://www.performance-wales.org/it-was-40-years-ago-today/>. The project also uses the title, *What's Welsh for Performance?*.

³ The researcher on the project was Delyth Edwards.

history.⁴ Chapter has generously allowed me access to their archive. In addition, oral history interviews with key personnel have helped to gather further information for this project, including discussions with Chapter's founders Christine Kinsey and Mik Flood.⁵ And, as mentioned, to further substantiate my claims and examine the transferability of my methodologies, I have also undertaken a small case study on Camden People's Theatre, which was enabled through a small commission. These two case studies have allowed me to examine closely the relationship between venues and their performance history in an attempt to reach an understanding of the contemporary value of past approaches to producing theatre.

0.2 THE THESIS'S STRUCTURE

This thesis addresses three main research questions. The first question focuses on the reconstructive relationship between the elements in the tripartite approach and the transferability of the enquiry:

1. What methodologies must we apply to reconstructively acquire knowledge about the relationship between a venue and its performance history; and how can these methodologies become transferable?

The word "reconstructively" here alludes to the idea that the investigative aspect of this thesis is formulated via methods of reconstruction. The first method, a written account of Chapter's early years with a focus on its experimental performance history, will take a traditional scholarly approach by using a historical lens for its exploration. By researching in a variety of archives (supplemented with oral histories), I have been able to reconstruct a chronology of Chapter's early performance history, concentrating on the relationship Chapter had as a venue

⁴ My first piece of practice-as-research was made before the shift in research questions occurred; however, the way I have positioned the research is in accordance with the reformulated thesis, and I therefore reflect on this through hindsight in the framework of the newly formed questions.

⁵ I was also able to contact many more people from Chapter's past, including former artists. Others contacted me after finding out about my research via social media and publications.

to theatre making and producing, which has hitherto not been written about. The second methodological approach consists of three Practice-as-Research experiments, through which I have been able to test what insights the components – venue–performance–document offer when examined through a tripartite approach. Part Two of this introduction outlines the tripartite approach. It is only once such an approach is enacted, I suggest, that we can begin to understand the relationship a venue has to its theatrical past. Furthermore, other venues can employ the tripartite model as a means to look to their own past approaches to producing and presenting alternative works.

The second research question is as follows:

2. How might considering the three constituents of a venue's history (its physical site, its past events and its archival remains) enable live performance activation that allows for the venue's history to become experiential and open it for evaluation?

In the scholarly fields considering archival practice, re-enactment and site-based work alike,⁶ the relationship between venue, performance and document is something that is often overlooked. Using Practice-as-Research, I am interested to see what new insights might be revealed that seek to both embody the performance aspects of venues, and, perhaps more importantly, reactivate those former policies may have shaped the identity of the institution.

Diana Taylor talks of embodied practices and says that:

[...] performance may be *about* something that helps us understand the past, and it may reactivate issues or scenarios from the past by staging them in the present. But performance does more than that. The physical mechanics of staging can also keep alive an organizational infrastructure, a practice or know-how, an episteme, and a politics that goes beyond the explicit topic (2006: 68).

⁶ These fields are linked to the tripartite relationship identified above: site – venue, re-enactment – performance, archival – document.

I take on Taylor's claim of looking to both the archive and repertoire as means to engage with and understand a history. Taylor argues that performances:

make history by using lessons and attitudes derived from previous experience to produce change in the present. If performances can intervene in these ways, then we cannot understand history—past, present, or future—without understanding the workings of the repertoire as well as the archive (2006: 72).

In enacting this claim in my PaR, it is with the help of the tripartite approach established by the research that performance venues may examine their own history and look to the contemporary relevance of past approaches to producing theatre, as that relationship is reconstructed and becomes experiential.

Finally I ask:

3. To what extent can a venue itself be considered an archive of the performances that occurred there?

To investigate the historical relationship between venue and performance, I look to three bodies of scholarship in particular: the literature on site and hauntology (which investigates the question of the relationship between venue and performance by examining what remains), on the relationship between archive and performance, and on theories of re-enactment.

The literature review (Chapter One) is consequently divided into three sections: The first section examines literature on site and its relationship to performance. Although an arts venue does not by its nature invite 'site-specific responses' in the narrower sense, Chapter in the 1970s was engaged in programming practices that would now be ascribed to site-specific approaches to making theatre. It is therefore appropriate to consider what the literature on site has to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between site/venue and performance. I then turn to literature on hauntology, ghosting, remains and memory in relation to

performance and venue. Here, I examine, amongst others, Pearson (2010), Kaye (2001), Wilkie (2002), Marvin Carlson (2003), Diana Taylor (2003), Matthew Reason (2006) and Nicola Shaughnessy (2012). The second section turns to a discussion of the relationship between archive, document and performance, where I draw on the works of Peggy Phelan (1993), Reason (2006), André Lepecki (2010) and Heike Roms (2013), amongst others. Finally, I conclude with a discussion of re-enactment theory that looks at Pearson and Shanks (2001), Arns and Horn (2005) and Rebecca Schneider (2011). All sections examine the relationship that performance, documents / archives and re-enactment have to the overall issue of 'venue'. I will argue that the available literature does not sufficiently reflect on the historical role of the venue as a site of producing work and as a physical site that establishes specific relationships to the work that happened within it, and on the venue's consequences for archival and re-enactment work.

Chapter Two reviews my methodology, which is broken into two parts. The first deals with case studies of projects that investigate the history of comparable venues to Chapter: those of Chapter Arts Centre itself; Trace installation artspace (Cardiff); Arnolfini (Bristol); and The Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) (Glasgow). These venues have been chosen because they each have engaged with their own archives in some capacity. Much of the research for these case studies was gathered through undertaking interviews with key figures involved in the projects. I will propose that it is often the case in these projects that the venue's relationship to the history of the work produced there is not considered, either privileging the venue or the history. Projects I consider include The Performance Re-enactment Society's *Untitled Performance Stills* (2009) Clare Thornton's (who has worked with The Performance Re-enactment Society) *Corridors, Stairways and Corners* (2012). Heike Roms *How to Build an Arts Centre? A Guided Audio-Tour* (2011). Trace Collective's *Trace: Displaced* (2008) and the work that the CCA have done with regards to their archive.

Section Two of the methodology lays out the research enquiries of this research: a written historical approach and the performative experiments.

Regarding my Practice-as-Research model, I will refer to Robin Nelson (2013), who has written extensively on PaR and who offers a three-way diagram to outline the types of knowledge acquired through practice. These are: ‘Know-what: The tacit made explicit through critical reflection’; ‘Know-that: “Outsider” distance knowledge’; and ‘Know-how: “Insider” close-up knowing’ (2013: 37). My approach to practice has moved between these different frameworks; I began by engaging in a critical reflection and examining the already existing knowledge about Chapter; I then became an “outsider” gaining knowledge through archival research and oral history interviews with ‘insiders’; and finally, I become the “insider” in the practical experiments, where I aim to gain an embodied knowledge of Chapter’s history.

The discussions on methodology directly inform the subsequent two chapters. Chapter Three provides a historical account of Chapter. This account offers this research a comprehensive understanding of the chosen venue to inform the case study; further still it underlines the importance of understanding how experimental theatre was produced there in the 1970s. It traces Chapter’s emergence and early years (1968–1973) and what I consider to be a turning point in its theatre programming policy in its first decade, the residency programme (1977). It will clarify the arts centre’s philosophy and its approaches to making and presenting theatre work. The evidence on which I will be drawing is derived from Chapter’s own archive, The National Library of Wales, and the V&A’s Theatre and Performance Archives. This is supplemented by the oral histories that act as first-hand accounts of the ideas and intentions that directed the early operations of Chapter, and offer a way to understand how the interviewees view their contribution to Chapter’s history in retrospect, whether that be running the venue, or bringing performance work to the arts centre that shifted the way the venue was operated.

There is little academic literature on Chapter, which is not uncommon when it comes to alternative artistic venues. Invariably the available research focuses on theatre artists and the work produced, rather than on the place in which the work was made and more importantly the venue conditions under which the work was produced. The only published accounts of Chapter's history in this period are: Mike Pearson's *Marking Time: Performance, Archaeology and the City* (2013), which provides an account of the ecology of alternative theatre making in Cardiff from the 1960s to the present day and discusses Chapter in two of its chapters: 'A potted history of Chapter Arts Centre' and 'Chapter's Yard', a short excerpt on the arts venue's residencies that transformed its outdoor spaces. Heike Roms's aforementioned research project, *What's Welsh for Performance?*, has also examined a similar time period in the history of the art centre to my project. The lack of wider academic interest in Chapter is surprising, as is the lack of interest in the history of alternative theatrical or artistic venues in general: I suggest that the performance-focused practices employed at Chapter, such as its innovative theatre programming approaches in its first decade, not only secured its reputation in becoming a leading European Arts Centre today but were actually pioneered there. Thus, Chapter's impact on the British theatre scene (and further afield) has been significant; what was implemented in Chapter, I argue, impacted on how theatre was made and seen in the 1970s and beyond, which in turn would have had a significant influence on what the artists were able to create there.

However, this is not a study to prove Chapter's status as a pioneering venue of experimental performance work, rather this research project is interested in reconstructing the relationship between Chapter as a theatrical venue, the performance events it presented and the documents these have left behind in order to understand the arts centre's practices in the 1970s and, furthermore, to investigate if it is possible and valuable to reach back to former practices and policies for the operation of the venue's history, with a particular focus on theatrical past.

This research therefore, is not only concerned with the history of Chapter specifically, but more generally with the issue of alternative theatre venues, arguing that to locate and understand how performance work was created, and the conditions under which it was created, one can reach back and uncover, identify and perform a past relationship between a venue and the performances it produced.

I will supplement this research with scholarship on the alternative theatre scene of this period. Contemporary publications include Malcolm Hay's (1980) essay on venues in his contribution to Sandy Craig's *Dreams and Deconstructions* (1980), a book that traces the history of alternative theatre of in Britain. This history is also outlined in *The Radical Theatre Notebook* by Arthur Sainer (1975). In addition, I will also draw on more recent scholarship on alternative theatre venues, including Mike Pearson's history of the Mickery Theatre (2011), a key venue in Holland whose policies directly influenced the ones employed at Chapter in the mid-seventies.

The oral history interviews not only include the founders of Chapter: Mik Flood and Christine Kinsey, but also Chris Jordan and Shelia Burnett from The Pip Simmons Theatre Group, who performed significant works there.

Chapter Four provides a critical analysis of my PaR experiments. These experiments have been structured according to three main investigations, each addressing two constituent parts of the tripartite relationship of venue-performance-document that is at the core of my interest. The first experiment examines the relationship between performance and document, in reference to a performance piece entitled *Playing (at) Woyzeck*, which I staged as part of the *Experimentica* festival at Chapter in November 2013.⁷ This work's aim was to investigate if the documentation of a performance alone can help illuminate the significant relationship

⁷ Experimentica is an annual festival at Chapter that showcases a diverse range of experimental theatre.

between the work and the venue that produced it and was therefore a first trial experiment of the methodology.

The second experiment investigated the relationship between venue and document. This was explored through a performance staged at Camden People's Theatre, London, called *Turning the Spotlight on the People* (September 2014)⁸. It investigated through performative means if the documents relating to the operations of a venue can make its history accessible and experiential. With regards to the methodology, this experiment was concerned with its transferability, as well as with experimenting how past relationships between venue and performance can be reconstructed. The third experiment investigated all three aspects – the venue, performances and documents saved. This piece was called *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* (June 2015), a studio-based exploration that, amongst other factors, questioned how a venue is performed when the physical architecture of that place is absent, unpicking what aspects of the history of performance in a specific venue remain in the archive, and examining to what extent the venue itself could be considered an archive of the performances that have occurred there.

As outlined, the PaR experiments serve as methodological enquiries, each possessing their own framework in which the case studies were examined. The major experiment is *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, which enacts the full tripartite formula I have devised. The other two have each omitted one of the three factors – the first excluding the venue and the second omitting the performance – to allow for a focused testing of the methodology, its generativeness and significance and to enable it to evolve and be refined.

My examination of the practice includes a self-reflexive and reflective analysis of the experiments undertaken. An accompanying Photobook, sound files and a short film of

⁸ This performance was made in a different venue due to the difficulty in accessing Chapter's spaces to present my work.

Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales offer a means for the reader to navigate the various experiments that were conducted as part of the research.⁹

The main focus of the practice experiments has been investigating where the history of a venue resides and on examining how the remains (documents, memories, traces) of a venue's history might allow for an interrogation and adoptability of the contemporary relevance of past approaches to producing experimental theatre today.

To conclude my thesis, I will evaluate how reconstructing the relationship between the site or building, past performances (events) and archival documents as the three elements of a venue's past can help to both perform a past relationship and allow similar venues to adopt similar approaches to understanding their own past. I also include extracts from an interview with Andy Eagle and Hannah Firth, Chapter Art Centre's current director and stand in director, to reflect on how Chapter might make use of its archive in the future, and on the contemporary value for a venue to reach back to its former policies. The conclusion also assesses whether the tripartite methodological enquiry explored in this thesis could be a transferable method for other venues to engage with and understand their history.

INTRODUCTION PART 2

VENUE – PERFORMANCE – DOCUMENT: A TRIPARTITE APPROACH

0.3 OVERVIEW

As mentioned, my thesis explores whether a more nuanced understanding of a venue and its performances history can be established by using a practice-based methodology that examines the relationship between the venue – performance – document using a tripartite approach. With the help of performance practice, I will investigate what these three constituents collectively

⁹ This documentation can be found in the accompanying Photobook, appendices and the USB stick. The reader will be invited to begin examining this material from Chapter Three.

represent and what they may do as individual elements. I will suggest that these elements are inseparable and are needed in order to offer a deeper understanding of the history to be established and then transmitted.

Within this discussion, Theatre scholar, Rebecca Schneider's *Performing Remains* (2011) and Performance scholar, Diana Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire* (2003) are key texts and they both aid my thinking in exploring and unpicking how the three components can potentially work together, or not. Both write how performance or performative acts are often viewed as less important to that of the written or supposedly fixed document, and therefore they offer rich arguments for this approach.

0.4 VENUE: THE BUILDING

Philosopher Jacques Derrida notes how the word archive comes from the Greek '*arkheion*: initially a house, a domicile, an address, the residence of the superior magistrates, the *achons*, those who commanded' (1995: 2). The notion of "Archive" is therefore rooted in something fixed, something stable and governed by those that yield power. I will suggest that in addition to a place that stores documents away, that the architecture of the building itself could be considered as spaces in which to both reconstruct from and within.

The remains of a building are key to understanding the past; ruins and structural remains act as the bare bones for our comprehension of the past. In her work on re-enactment, Rebecca Schneider posits that: '[...] the habit of the West is to privilege bones as index of a flesh that was once, being "once" only after the fact (2011: 102). Schneider also claims that '[...] death appears to result in the paradoxical production of both disappearance *and* remains. Disappearance, that citational practice, that after-the-factness, clings to remains – absent flesh *does* ghost bones' (2011: 102). For the purposes of this research project, this distinction proposed by Schneider could be expanded to consider the venue as the "bones" and

performance acts as the “flesh”, co-existing in an interlocking relationship. The venue is bare unless anything happens within it and once an event, such as a performance takes place, it becomes part of the physical makeup of the venue. Each event ‘writes’ over the next, creating a palimpsest-like connection. My own methodology considers the building to be its own archive, which can be disseminated via a process of reconstruction, allowing the archive to then be reconstructed in a specifically performative mode, or an embodiment. Moreover, in addition to policy and performance documents held in the archive, I suggest that considering the building and physical materiality of the venue as a way of understanding its relationship to performance is a new departure for scholarship that examines recent alternative theatre practices.

0.5 PERFORMANCE: THE EVENT

One of the main concerns for this research project is to analyse the relationship between venue, performance and document. Moreover, the relationship is considered through practice, suggesting that performative acts as a means to communicate history are something that should be taken seriously. In re-enactment theory, Schneider provides substantial research into American Civil War re-enactors to examine how these practices that are often seen as ‘[...] primitive, popular, folk, naïve [...]’ (2011: 100) in fact ensure that memory (and therefore history or traditions), does not disappear, as opposed to the West’s more traditional idea that performance is antithetical to saving (see Phelan 1993). Practices that engage in orality or performative modes of transmitting memory have tended to fall under a ‘[...] memory *verses* history [...]’ (2011: 100, emphasis added) binary. Schneider responds by stating that: ‘Oral history also often falls under the rubric of ritual. In turn, “ritual” generally (or historically) has fallen under the rubric of “ethnic”’ (2011: 100), which, as Schneider acknowledges, is a term

that all too often refers to race, class and primitivism – or to “peoples without writing”.¹⁰ In my discussion of the tripartite approach, I propose oral histories and the document should be viewed equally.

Folk traditions and oral histories have frequently been viewed as nostalgic and therefore not offering an authentic historical truth. Oral historian Alessandro Portelli suggests – according to a succinct summary by Shelly Trower – that it is ‘[...] literate societies that generate the nostalgic fantasies about “primitive orality,” and that writers like [Walter] Ong adopt a “binary approach” to orality and literacy, which are subjected to a linear model of history whereby the former is supposedly replaced by the latter’ (Tower 2011: 6).¹¹

Oral histories and performative acts coincide in the sense that they are not viewed as something fixed and therefore reliable. In *The Archive and the Repertoire*, Diana Taylor proposes that the ‘[...] actions that are the repertoire do not remain the same’ as ‘[...] opposed to the supposedly stable objects in the archive’ (2003: 20). Della Pollock, in reference to oral histories, posits that:

The performance of oral history is itself a transformational process. At the very least, it translates subjectively remembered events into embodied memory acts, moving memory into re-membering. That passage not only risks but endows the emerging history/narrative with change’ (2005: 2).

Along with oral histories, Taylor suggests that ‘[t]he repertoire requires presence: people participate in the production and reproduction of knowledge by “being there”, being part of the transmission’ (2003: 20). Taylor acknowledges that the archive and the repertoire ‘[...] usually work in tandem’ (2003: 21); however, she goes on to state that ‘[...] the tendency has been to banish the repertoire to the past’ (2003: 21). Instead of ‘banishment’, I propose that the archive should be released as repertoire.

¹⁰ Here Schneider references Jacques Le Goff, *History and Memory* (1992).

¹¹ See: Alessandro Portelli’s *The Text and the Voice: Writing, Speaking and Democracy in American Literature* (1994) and Walter Ong’s *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (1982).

I suggest that the building and performance are unable to be separated; one must acknowledge the role of the building in order to comprehend what happened within it, and to understand what happened within it is to understand the building. I argue here that the archive and the repertoire should be considered not at different ends of a spectrum but as congruent, co-existing simultaneously in the same place – that of the venue itself.

0.6 DOCUMENT: THE ARCHIVE

In order to discover ways to transmit the archive as repertoire it is important to reflect first on the traditional convention of approaching the archive as a fixed and stable object. As Matthew Reason suggests, this conventional approach renders the archive as ‘dumb objects not allowed to speak for themselves, but spoken for’ (2003: 89). In a parallel manner, Reason suggests that the archive is potentially transformative and can be a catalyst for making new performance works. He asks: ‘Instead of the archive’s instability and compromised authority being an inevitable accident, can it be transformed into the central motif of a live performance archive celebrating transformation and fluidity?’ (2003: 87). We can contrast his proposal with that of Schneider, who notes in response to Taylor’s *The Archive and the Repertoire* that:

[w]e may say that Taylor is less concerned with the inter(in)animation of the live and the archived than she is in rescuing performance for archival account. That is, she works to situate the repertoire *as another kind of archive*, rather than emphasising the twin effort of situating the archive *as another kind of performance* (2011: 108).

Similarly literary scholar Carolyn Steedman points out that the archive is a place of creative possibilities (2001), and Heike Roms suggests that ‘[t]he archive offers a potential site for engagement that even the most comprehensive scholarly critique or artistic reimagining can never fully exhaust’ (2013: 37).

Schneider, Roms and Steedman all imply a belief that the archive possesses its own performative presence; however, I wish to propose that an archive remains in a state of stasis

until this presence is somehow activated in performance. One could argue that, when activated, the archive generates a purely subjective experience (similar to the experience of watching a live performance). Yet, in using a document that is perceived as holding authority, that subjectivity is removed. My proposal is that activating reconstructed archival materials into a live performance releases the supposedly fixed documents and offers these relationships up for scrutiny and for future development.

CHAPTER ONE

LITERATURE REVIEW: PERFORMANCE AND SITE, PERFORMANCE AND THE ARCHIVE; AND RE-ENACTMENT

1.0 INTRODUCTION: THE VENUE AT THE CORE

I have broken down the following literature review into three distinct field, each of which addresses performance in relation to one of the three elements that I have identified for an examination of a venue's history (venue or site, performance, document). Firstly, I review the literature on site and its relationship to performance. The scholarship on site-specificity in performance can help to clarify the relationship between performance and the venue or site in which it takes place, both in respect to the physical materiality of the site and to its cultural and historical dimensions. And as I have stated in the introduction, although a dedicated arts venue such as Chapter (albeit one that adapted a non-arts building for its purpose) does not by its nature invite 'site-specific responses' in the narrower sense (that is, the understanding that site-specific performances uses non-art spaces), Chapter in the 1970s was engaged in programming practices that would now be classed as belonging to site-specific approaches to making theatre. It is therefore appropriate to consider what the literature on site has to contribute to our understanding of the relationship between site/venue and performance. I then turn to literature on ghosting and site, which offers a consideration of what remains in a place (post event) and how an examination of this might help shed light on the **venue** and its relationship to its performance past. Secondly, I look to the debate on performance and its relationship to the archive, and finally, the literature on re-enactment. The discussion on performance's relationship to the archive introduces the notion and role of the **document**; and finally, because I have been engaging in practices of reconstruction, I look at the debate on re-enactment, which concentrates on **performance** itself.¹² I will argue that the available literature offers only partial

¹² Although in my tripartite approach the order is venue-performance-document, I have shifted the order of the latter two in this discussion because the re-enactment debate arose from the archive debate in performance studies.

approaches to understanding the relationship between venue, performance and document that interest me in this thesis: either it considers the relationship between venue or site and performance but neglects the historical dimension and with it the question of the archive; or it discusses the relationship between archive and performance or the re-enactment of past performances, but neglects the importance of the venue or site within this.

In section A, I firstly look to define site-specificity where I will discuss Kaye (2000), who was one of the first to theorise site-specific theatre, Wilkie's essay *Mapping the Terrain* (2002) introduces different vocabularies with which to consider site-specific work, and Pearson's (2010) book on the subject lays out a framework with which to analyse site-specificity. I will then look to specific performances to examine the relationships between venue and performance. I then look to what it is meant by the term 'ghosting'¹³ to examine what it proposes about traces that are left behind after an event, specifically within the venue in which the event occurred. I will again refer to Pearson, in particular his work with Brith Gof and their concept of the relationship between venue and performance as that of "host and ghost". Carlson's *The Haunted Stage* (2003) takes a more traditional look at theatre as haunted through repetition and the audience's memory. I will complement this with a reference to Nicola Shaughnessy's insights into memory (2012). Powell and Shaffer's article 'On the Haunting of Performance Studies' (2009) challenges Peggy Phelan's claim that performance's ontology is located in its disappearance (1993), and instead borrows Derrida's term 'Hauntology' from his book, *Spectres of Marx* (1994)¹⁴. The notion of hauntology is also explored in Taylor's *The Archive and the Repertoire* (2003), which I will use as a way to consider performance studies and the notion of the *revenant*. More recently, Kelina Gotman's

¹³ A term used by Blau, Roach and Carlson. Carlson argues that: 'The present experience is always ghosted by previous experiences and associations whilst these ghosts are simultaneously shifted and modified by the processes of recycling and recollection' (2003: 2).

¹⁴ The full title of the work is: *Spectres of Marx: The state of the debt, the work of mourning and the new international*.

article (2015), in examining Sadler's Wells in London, argues that a haunting enables the venue to be considered an archive, which will be an important reference point for this research.

Section B examines archival practices in relation to performance. It will consider Phelan's equation of performance's ontology with disappearance (1993), Schneider's proposition that performance in fact remains (2011), the notion of documentation and disappearance as discussed by Reason (2006), Lepecki's "will to archive" (2010) and, most recently, the question of legacy and collaboration as discussed by Roms (2013), amongst others. This section of the literature review will also consider how artists and scholars have engaged practically with the archive's relationship to the event which it documents. In order to do this I will follow Taylor's invitation to consider cultural memory through the double lens of archives and performance (2003), simultaneously looking at the event (repertoire) and the document (archive).

Finally, in Section C, I explore the issue of re-enactment, a notion that has been explored by many theorists in various fields. There is a plethora of related terms, including 'revival', 'restaging', 'revisiting', 'reconstitution', 'reconstruction', amongst many others. Crossing theatre studies, visual art and history, 're-enactment' is examined through a different lens in each of these fields. This literature review explores the role that theatre has played for re-enactment, specifically engaging with Pearson and Shanks (2001) and Schneider (2011). I am aware of the extensive literature on the subject from visual arts and historical perspectives and will be touching on them; however, they are not as relevant to my research and therefore are not as fully explored. This chapter examines the vocabularies that are employed within theatre and performance studies regarding the practice of re-enactment, and furthermore looks at seminal works that fit this category. Finally, this literature review looks at how the venue (or site) is considered in relation to performance work that defines itself as a re-enactment.

SECTION A: VENUE – PERFORMANCE: SITE AND GHOSTING

1.1 DEFINITION OF SITE-SPECIFICITY

To examine venues as places that in both their physical make-up and their cultural and historical position impact on the making and producing of performance, I look to existing literature on site, with all the provisos given above. The following discussion on site-specific performance is therefore by no means intended to be an exhaustive one; instead it is meant as an overview of its main theorists to establish how scholars in the field have defined the practice. The focus will be on the relationship between venue/building/site and the performances that occur(ed) in them.

The terminology regarding site-specific work is difficult to pin down. As Pearson notes in his book on site-specific performance: ‘although the search for a practicable, encompassing definition of site-specific performance has long claimed scholarly attention, it remains slippery’ (2010: 7). One of the early writers on site-specificity in performance was Kaye, who defines site-specificity as ‘practices which, in one way or another, articulate exchanges between the work of art and the places in which its meaning are defined’ (2000: 1). He traces the beginning of site-specific art to visual art, in particular minimalist sculpture of the 1960s. Like minimalist sculpture, which was ‘linked to an exposure of the object’s situation’, ‘site-specificity presents a challenge to notions of “original” or “fixed” location, problematising the relationship between work and site’ (2000: 2). Fiona Wilkie (2002) uses a more expansive definition of site-specific performance, suggesting it refers to both the ‘[u]se of non-theatre locations (‘found spaces’)’ and the ‘influence of site in the creation of the performance’ (2002: 149). Wilkie’s second definition broadens the scope of how site-specific practice could apply to any site. On discussing process in site-based work, Wilkie explains how ‘the physicality of the site might offer ‘different stimuli elements’ to the creation process as ‘experimentation with

playing spaces and the different audience interaction elements that suit each space provide fresh perspectives for working [...]’ (2002: 156).

Pearson places a greater emphasis on the transformative dimensions of the practice, proposing that ‘site may be transformed by the disruptive presence of performance seeking a relationship other than that of a ready-made scenic background against which to place its figures’ (2010: 2).

Pearson adds to this an attention to the possible relationships between site, performance and audience. As he states:

Site-specific performance may appropriate a pre-existing spatial configuration, annexing the architectural features of site to distribute its audience – staircases, balconies or the terraces of a sales ring, providing prospects unfamiliar or impossible to conspire in the auditorium. Or it may impose new arrangements with the audience in lines, alleys or blocks to conspire effects of distance, closeness, obliqueness, etc. It need not be withdrawn to a place of singular scrutiny. (Pearson 2010: 176)

Pearson (2010: 7) posits that Patrice Pavis was one of the first theatre scholars to discuss the term in 1998. This rather late coinage of the terminology of course does not mean that artists had not engaged in such practices before the term was established within a scholarly context. In his chronology of site-specific performance, Pearson begins in 1979, when his Wales-based company, Brith Gof, created performances that were “site-specific” in all but name: they performed work in castles, museums, disused breweries, disused factories and many more non-theatre sites.¹⁵ Similarly, Lois Keidan states that ‘ [...] artists have always worked with ideas of site, and an engagement with questions of place are by no means unique to a post-eighties generation’ (2006: 11). However, Keidan proposes that since the 1980s ‘ [...] artists from a diverse range of disciplines and working with a broad range of approaches are choosing to

¹⁵ Based on Pearson’s ‘Chronology’ (2010: viii).

operate outside the constraints of “authorised” culture and the received sites for art to make work that responds to the conditions of the contemporary [...]’ (2006: 11).

Academics and members of performance company, Wrights & Sites, Stephen Hodge and Cathy Turner also argue that the tradition in site-based work has been to break free from the conventional spaces of the gallery and theatre. Regarding the history of site-specific practice, Hodge and Turner define three predecessors that ‘have been influential but which tend to be overlooked’ (2012: 94). They go on to identify these as: Happenings and Fluxus events in the 1960s, the Situationist International (1957 – 68) and British land artists of the 1960s and 1970s.¹⁶ In discussing Happenings and Fluxus, Hodge and Turner argue that these practices ‘explored the potential of the artwork to circulate within the everyday, the popular, the unofficial, the informal and the counter-cultural, outside the boundaries of the art establishment’ (2012: 95). But as Hodge and Turner propose: ‘this does not mean that the work is [...] a rejection of art institutions’ (2012: 93). They suggest instead that we should not think of ‘site-specific work as a genre of live art, but as a way of turning our attention to the relationship between performance and its geography, focusing on the work that places this relationship at the centre of its concerns [...]’ (2012: 93).

What all cited scholars have in common is the recognition of the importance of site for performance making and its transformation through performance practice. The notion of ‘site’, however, in this instance is left rather broad.

1.2 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SITE AND PERFORMANCE

To better understand the relationship between performance and site I turn my attention to two examples of site-specific work: Brith Gof’s *Tri Bywyd* (1994) and DreamThinkSpeak’s *Absent*

¹⁶ They do not present these as an exhaustive list of influences, but situate their influence within the overall notion of ‘ground and groundlessness’; (see Hodge and Turner 2012: 94).

(2015). DreamThinkSpeak define their work as site-responsive. Wilkie noted in her 2002 article how site-specific work has produced a whole new set of terminologies, including ‘[...] “site-determined”, “site-referenced”, “site-conscious”, “site-responsive”, “context-specific”’ (2002: 149), which may offer a more differentiated analysis of the differing ways in which to both approach and create performance works within a site.

One of the earliest companies in the UK to make site-specific work that carried this nomenclature is Welsh company, Brith Gof. Their production of *Tri Bywyd* (Three Lives) (1994) was a site-specific performance on the theme of death and the domestic that was made and presented in a rural location: Clywedog in Ceredigion. It was a performance whose ‘set’ (or as designer Cliff McLucas called it, ‘architecture’) was constructed out of scaffolding within and around a ruined farmhouse. The performance played with the existing architecture being superimpositioned with temporary structures that would trigger, enhance and guide the performance’s relationship to the site.

McLucas labelled *Tri Bywyd* as ‘*architectureeventspace*, a hybrid of architecture and event’ (Pearson 2010: 60). Kaye explains how ‘a place and what is built there bleed into one another and constitute another order of existence – something like “placeevent” (2000: 56).¹⁷ Furthermore, Kaye posits that by ‘using explicitly “hybrid” practices’ Brith Gof sought ‘to provoke a series of dialogues and confrontations between performance and location’ (2000: 53). As previously mentioned, McLucas introduced a third element to this hybridity: the public to the event. As he states: ‘The public is an active agent and theatre doesn’t exist until it/they is/are engaged. As such, they may define, in very large part what is happening – what the piece is’ (1993: 6).

In combining architecture (existing and temporary), performance and the public, a relationship is formed, problematized and challenged; they become embroiled with one

¹⁷ Placeevent is a term coined by Cliff McLucas (1996).

another. In venues where the architecture itself becomes part of the performance's framing and the spaces are transformed to fit the performance's requirements, something happens and then perhaps lingers.

DreamThinkSpeak's 2015 production of *Absent* was created in Shoreditch Town Hall, a theatre space in London that often uses its site for what is now termed immersive and site-based work. For *Absent* the town hall was, on the surface, transformed into a homogenised hotel; even the sign outside displayed its renovation as a hotel conglomerate. The architecture of the building was used to enhance the fake front of the production: the foyer was made into a lobby, with a front desk, corporate screens displaying the plans for the hotel and T.V. monitors showing a looped video of the "corporate manager" guiding the audience through the plans for the new business. In the lobby were newspapers strewn on seats and opened on an article about a former socialite who had been evicted from a hotel due to mounting up debt over her fifty-year stay.

In the basement of the building the "hotel" had been constructed. A small space had been transformed into a room not dissimilar to one found in large hotel chain: wood panels and cheap, red throws neatly tucked into the well-made bed, a T.V. monitor on a bracket on the wall, and a generic, airless feeling in the air. The formation of the room would be repeated, sometimes in the hundreds, using scale-models around the spaces. In its vastness, the architecture of the space was used to show the endless, dilapidated corridors of Shoreditch Town Hall. The relationship between the constructed spaces and the spaces that had been left untouched created an interesting juxtaposition that entangled the image of a forgotten former hotel with a newly renovated one. This relationship between architectures is not dissimilar to that of *Tri Bywyd*; its very construction informs or even enforces how performers move within it and how spectators move and witness.

The hotel façade was the backdrop to the narrative that unfolded, which told a story of a woman who at one time was respected, revered and left to live her hedonistic lifestyle in the hotel. The basement rooms fast-forwarded her story to the present day, where it was the leftovers, the cracks and the memories that remained, with her absence felt throughout. The T.V. screens in the repeated hotel rooms showed the hotel and the life of the protagonist in its heyday, offering the audience a glimpse into the past of the architecture – even though the audience knew that that past was in fact the building’s present.

It is clear from these two examples how the architecture of site plays a significant role in how site-specific performance is created. Its layout, structures and size all impose potential meanings and help in establishing links or relationships to the work that is created within them. In the example of *Tri Bywyd*, where new architecture was built upon a dilapidated barn it helps to reinforce the relationship between the site and the work, and then adds meaning and narrative for the public who witness it.

1.3 THE GHOSTED VENUE: WHAT REMAINS

The relationship between performance and venue has often been conceptualized as a kind of ‘ghosting’. I want to consider here briefly definitions of ghosting in Pearson (1997 and 2011), Carlson (2003), Phelan (1997), Taylor (2003), Shaughnessy (2012), Gotman (2015), and Powell and Shafer (2009). They are concerned largely with the following questions: how memories of previous performances and their setting can be said to ghost an audience’s experience of present work; how site-specific theatre works with the ghosts of cultural and individual memory; and – the point that is of most interest to my investigation – how a venue can be said to be ghosted by the events that occurred in it, therefore engaging in its own performative history, thus allowing for it to be considered as its own archive.

Marvin Carlson investigates the theatre and its relationship to ‘ghosting’ and notes how ‘the present experience is always ghosted by previous experiences and associations while these ghosts are simultaneously shifted and modified by the processes of recycling and recollection’ (2003: 2). Venue plays an important role in this: as Carlson proposes, ‘[t]he audiences’ memories of the previous work of those theatre artists are reinforced by the fact that much or all of that previous work was experienced in the same physical surroundings’ (2003: 143). Pearson argues in a similar manner, but places more emphasis on the presence of cultural memories as attached to a specific place: ‘[t]he space of theatre is always haunted both by the cultural memories it deals with and the summoning of previous experiences by those present’ (2011: 61 - 62). In his work with Brith Gof, Pearson explored this relationship in the performance works they created and in their work on site-specificity, Brith Gof coined the phrase “Host and Ghost” to describe the relationship between site and performance: as Pearson writes:

Site-specific performances rely upon the complex superimposition and co-existence of a number of narratives and architectures, historical and contemporary. These fall into two groups: those that pre-exist the work – of the host – and those which are of the work – of the ghost’ (1997: 95 – 96).

Therefore, the host (the site) becomes haunted by the ghost (the performance). In creating *Gododdin* (1989), which was a large-scale adaptation of the Welsh medieval poem of the same name that was staged in a former Rover factory in Cardiff, Brith Gof were aware of the implications of working within a former industrial site that for many would have been a place of employment, transformed into a place of memory once it closed down. Fiona Wilkie has explored the political implications that have been embedded into the reasons and executions of such works. She notes how, ‘[...] site-specific performance might choose to expose political or social issues surrounding the site to those outside [...]’; referring to *Gododdin* specifically, Wilkie suggests that it was ‘[...] spurred by the impetus of Thatcherism and what it had left

behind [...] in regards to privatisation and the enormous closure of British businesses' (2002: 144 – 145).

In my own work as a performer, I have engaged in similar experiences. In 2008 I began working as a performer for Birmingham-based Stan's Cafe on *Of All The People In All The World* (OATP), a show that uses grains of rice to represent statistics, creating various comparable piles. The setting for this particular version of the show was an old car parts factory in the Jewellery quarter of Birmingham; its redundancy and subsequent transformation into an arts venue spoke volumes of the diminished industry in Britain, in particular that of Birmingham. In a chapter on 'Placing Performance' as part of her book on applied theatre, Shaughnessy considers '[...] how site, space and place feature in the theory and practice of applied performance' (2012: 94) by referencing Stan's Cafe's OATP in Birmingham in 2008: 'I visited the Birmingham installation with my father, a retired production engineer who had spent his childhood and working life in Birmingham and for whom the factory setting had particular personal significance [...] for him (and presumably for others bringing similar experiences to the installation) the physical environment triggered memories of the life and death of the manufacturing industry in the region [...]' (2012: 123).

As a performer in this event I was able to be in dialogue with audience members and was struck by the amount of memories that were triggered simply by being in the space. Jen Harvie notes how the location of site-specific performance 'can work as a potent mnemonic trigger, helping to evoke specific past times related to the place and time of performance and facilitating a negotiation between the meanings of those times' (2005: 42). Similarly, Carlson states that '[...] memories have been consciously utilised by the theatre culture, but, even when they are not, they may still continue to operate, affecting reception in powerful and unexpected ways' (2003: 8). Audiences responded not only to the stories that the statistics in OATP generated and provoked, as it would be the case in more neutral spaces as I would later

discover; in this performance the response became about how Birmingham had changed, how the UK was no longer producing its own products and about feeling nostalgia for what the place once had been or, more importantly, what it represented. In site-specific work performances are thus “haunted” by the memories of previous events associated with the venue. Shaughnessy discusses another location-based project, Deborah Warner’s 1999 *Euston Tower Block Project*, and explains how ‘[...] live art was used to re-animate the site and to shift our perceptions of, and engagement with, a profoundly symbolic space. The industrious business environment was transformed into a ghostly, haunted place; its previous inhabitants had presence through absence, evoked through the chairs and objects left to question what it is all for’ (2012: 96).

Diana Taylor states that ‘[...] performance makes visible (for an instant, live, now) that which is always already there: the ghosts, the tropes, the scenarios that structure our individual and collective life. These spectres, made manifest through performance, alter future phantoms, future fantasies’ (2003: 143). Taylor claims that ‘[t]he ghost is by definition a repetition, Derrida’s *revenant*. This is the moment of postdisappearance, rather than the moment preceding it that Phelan points to’ (2003: 142). For Taylor performance remains as a kind of ghosting: ‘[m]y view of performance rests on the notion of ghosting, that visualisation that continues to act politically even as it exceeds the live’ (2003:143). Writing on the haunting of Performance Studies as a discipline, Powell and Shafer also challenge the assumption that performance disappears and claim that ‘[...] hauntology functions as a critique of ontology as we have understood it. Hauntology does not surpass ontology; it reimagines it’ (2009: 1). Phelan herself has considered the haunting of venues in relation to a historical venue in *Mourning Sex*. She argues that the excavation of the Rose Theatre in London in 1989 and the subsequent plans for rebuilding it led to the theatre becoming ‘less an “object” full of rocks, coins, and artefacts, and more a “subject”, an unruly, even contradictory form that refused to

stay dead' (1997: 79). If places are indeed addressed as subjects, then more focus should be applied to their agency.

Performance Studies scholar, Kelina Gotman, has extended the notion of ghosting and its impact on a venue's agency in her discussion of institutions, more specifically of Sadler's Wells. Gotman argues that Sadler's Wells is:

an institution that succeeds not to die, although it is ghosted, haunted, by its remains. In effect, it is all the more resilient, I argue, because of its carefully conjured spectrality. The institution seeks its own ghosts, and in so doing proclaims a right to remain – to being-there, or indeed to being here, on the very site under which these remains lie (2015: 62).

For Gotman, the renowned dance venue in London is thus haunted by the spectres of its past. The tangible remains (the building) and the intangible remains (memory) are somehow culturally and socially embedded into the makeup of the venue. Gotman posits that '[...] the apparent permanence of the theatre structure hosts and frames the immateriality of the performance that it defines' (2015: 65). She goes on to suggest that Sadler's Wells therefore is its own archive: 'This is not an archive that preserves a document or trace but one that enables the live to take place by virtue of the metonymic history, the symbolic house (and hearth) that undergirds it' (2015: 65). Gotman here proposes a consideration of the significance of the venue that offers a useful addition to the long-standing debate on performance, ephemerality and the archive. Gotman remarks on the importance of the venue's haunting: '[i]n haunting itself with its own ghosts, Sadler's Wells reaches towards a spectral historicity that legitimates – and indeed authenticates – the present' (2015: 67). Furthermore, she argues that Sadler's Wells encourages its own haunting in order to lay claim to its site, and suggests that this 'ensures that the site and the institution preserve an unimpeachable stake on the past, and so, too, on the institution's present and implied futurity' (2015: 70).

This new step in the notion of the venue being considered as an archive opens up and broadens out the discussion, and therefore it allows this research to now build on this concept further.

SECTION B: DOCUMENT – PERFORMANCE: THE ARCHIVE

1.4 DEFINITION: FROM DOCUMENTATION TO ARCHIVE

Heike Roms has outlined the trajectory of the debate on documentation and archiving within performance studies:

[...] the archive fever that is currently gripping performance scholarship [...] is frequently characterized as an extension of the long-standing debate on performance documentation, which has dominated the field since at least the publication in 1993 of Peggy Phelan's influential *Unmarked* (Roms 2013: 35).

Phelan wrote *Unmarked: The Politics of Performance* in the early 1990s as an account of a feminist approach to visibility, power and representation within politics. But it is her concept of performance's ontology outlined in the book that became a point of contention in performance studies. Phelan's often-cited definition of the ontology on performance proposed that '[p]erformance cannot be saved, recorded, documented, or otherwise participate in the circulation of representations *of* representations: once it does so, it becomes something other than performance. [...] Performance's being [...] becomes itself through disappearance' (1993: 146). This seminal text acted as a springboard for the later academic discourse on the concept of performance and ephemera. Schneider's essay 'Performance Remains' (2001) is an early scholarly article to discuss the notion of the archive alongside that of performance, and in doing so broadened the field toward a discussion of both archival practices and of reenactment practices, which now have become established areas of debate within performance studies. Schneider's essay takes Phelan's proposition and contests it by asking:

If we consider performance as 'of' disappearance, if we think of ephemerality as 'vanishing', and if we think of performance as the antithesis of 'saving', do we limit

ourselves to an understanding of performance predetermined by a cultural habituation to the patrilineal [...]?' (2001: 100).

As noted, Phelan's *Unmarked* was written as a feminist text; therefore Schneider's claim that the assumption of performance's disappearance colludes in patriarchy is key to a reading and understanding of both authors. Schneider posits how, '[t]he archive is habitual to western culture. We understand ourselves relative to the remains we accumulate, the tracks we house, mark, and cite, the material traces we acknowledge' (2001: 100). If, as it is understood that the West is a patrilineal society then the implications of this is that the archive, as philosopher Jacques Derrida claims, is under 'house arrest' (1995: 2); it remains in document form as a mark of authority, unable to be changed.

Clarke and Warren have pointed out that the equation of performance with disappearance preceded the work of Phelan: 'Since the 1960s, performance's origins have been ontologically founded on disappearance and ephemerality as vanishing. Performance has been positioned by Schechner, Blau and Phelan (amongst others) as "antithetical to saving"' (2009: 47). Schneider too has emphasised that Richard Schechner's position has rested on '[...] permanence (drama) and ephemerality (performance), privileging ephemerality on the claim that theatre can have no originals' (2011: 94). For a long time, though, the debate has situated the antithesis to performance's ephemerality within the notion of the document or documentation. It was only in the early 2000s that the archive entered the debate as a key concept. Roms argues that 'ontological and political matters continue to exercise many of the present debates on performance's relationship with the archive as an institution that not only houses documentation, but that is at the root of the cultural value we attach to documentary remains' (2013: 35 – 36). The shift from documentation to archive in performance studies, however, has provided, as Roms alerts us, 'a more powerful foil against which to assert performance's qualities and political potency than was previously served by the term documentation' (2013: 36). Roms goes on to propose that the term documentation presented a

‘[...] problematic status as evidence for past performance events’ (2013: 36), whereas the term archive ‘[...] compels us to consider an extended artistic oeuvre and the manner in which its remains are cared for. In short: one *documents* a *piece* of work, but one *archives* a *body* of work’ (2013: 36).

‘Archive’ as a concept has been defined in performance studies not just in relation to documents and documentation, of which it is often thought to be an extension, but also in opposition to notions of ‘repertoire’ (Taylor 2003) and ‘memory’ (Reason 2003). In writing about the archive and its relationship to what she terms the ‘repertoire’ of performance in 2003, Taylor defines archives as follows: “‘Archival’ memory exists as documents, maps, literary texts, letters, archaeological remains, bones, videos, films, CDs, all those items supposedly resistant to change’ (2003: 19). In short, the archive contains documentary objects that are defined by their tangibility and permanence. Taylor goes on to note that ‘[a]rchival memory works across distance, over time and space; investigators can go back to reexamine an ancient manuscript, letters find their addresses through time and place, and computer discs at times cough up lost files with the right software’ (2003: 19). It is within this characteristic that Taylor locates the fact that the archive ‘[...] sustains power’ (2003: 19).¹⁸ Writing on the relationship between archives and memory, Matthew Reason states that ‘[t]he identity of the archive as repository of accuracy and objectivity is one deeply rooted in the heart of our understanding of the archive [...]’ (2003: 83). Roms offers a further differentiation of the notion of the archive: she distinguishes the archive as ‘[...] customarily used in the singular to denote a type of knowledge, discourse, or manifestation of power’, as opposed to archival practices, which she describes as a ‘[...] plurality of actions (selecting, sorting, classifying, preserving, tending, handling) that are undertaken in order to maintain collections of documentary material’ (2013:

¹⁸ Taylor goes on to compare the archive to the notion of the ‘repertoire’, a comparison I will explore in more detail later.

38). This is of particular interest to my own understanding and approach to the archive, because, as Roms proposes, archival practices can be undertaken not just by archivist but by ‘scholars, artists [...]’ (2013: 38) and others – a notion that opens up the discussion about the archive from that of a place and institution towards the ‘doing’ of archives.

1.5 THE ARCHIVE AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO PERFORMANCE

As discussed in my introductory chapter, Diana Taylor has offered a pivotal turn in the debate on the relationship between the archive and performance. She distinguishes between the archive as ‘[...] supposedly enduring materials (i.e., texts, documents, buildings, bones) and the repertoire as: ‘[...] embodied practice/knowledge (i.e., spoken language, dance, sports, ritual)’ (2003: 19). To further her definition of the repertoire, Taylor suggests that ‘[t]he repertoire [...] enacts embodied memory: performances, gestures, orality, movement, dance, singing—in short, all those acts usually thought of as ephemeral, nonreproducible knowledge’ (2003: 19). Taylor insists that archive and repertoire work in tandem in transmitting historical knowledge and thus should be considered together. However, as she stresses, the archive has been privileged by Western scriptural culture. Schneider similarly posits that: ‘In the archive, flesh is given to be that which slips away. According to archive logic, flesh can house no memory of bone. In the archive, only bone speaks memory of flesh. Flesh is blind spot’ (2011: 100). Schneider goes on to note how this is culturally specific and is not applicable to those cultures that engage in ‘[...] orature, story-telling, visitation, improvisation, or embodied ritual practice *as history*’ (2011: 100). However, the logic of the archive ensures that flesh disappears, thus preventing archive and performance from complementing or enhancing one another. As Schneider puts it in succinct terms, ‘[...] in privileging an understanding of performance as a refusal to remain, do we ignore other ways of knowing, other modes of remembering, that might be situated precisely in the ways in which performance remains, but remains differently?’ (2001: 101). Taylor too considers performance as a different form of remaining:

‘Embodied memory, because it is live, exceeds the archive’s ability to capture it. But that does not mean that performance – as ritualised, formalised, or reiterative behaviour–disappears’ (2003: 20).

There is a proposition implied in Taylor’s and Schneider’s work that performance, in its mode of live transmission, its staged encounters, its focus on orality and embodiment, possesses its own historical knowledge, different but equal to the archive. In a similar vein, Matthew Reason suggests that, as well as disappearing, ‘performance also endures. Performance is present and represented in various media and activity that, although not the thing itself, reflect upon, remember, evoke and retain something of performance’ (2006: 1).

SECTION C: PERFORMANCE – DOCUMENT: RE-ENACTMENT

‘The interest in re-enactments marks the current fascination with retrieving live events that took place and are now known only through archival documents, film and video clips, interviews, and so on’ (Jones 2011: 19)

1.6 DEFINITION OF RE-ENACTMENT

Rebecca Schneider offers a definition of re-enactment by presenting it as something that is actually difficult to define: ‘In arts contexts, the term “re-enactment” is contested and in flux. The term “appropriation art” is arguably its most immediate precedent [...]. But if the term re-enactment is fitting at all, it fits only because it is as yet porous, intermedial, and rather poorly defined’ (2011: 29). Schneider goes on to note how the dictionary only speaks of the term with regards to event re-enactments, namely that of battles. Art critic and historian, Sven Lütticken differentiates between re-enactments of events such as battles and artistic ones, noting how ‘[r]e-enactments are to a greater or lesser extent representations of the “original” performances, but many artistic re-enactments try to transcend slavish reproduction and create a difference’ (2005: 5). Inke Arns and Gabriele Horn also claim that historical re-enactments ‘[...] are about

imagining oneself away into another time and have nothing (or little) to do with the present, such as playing a totally different role that has nothing (or little) to do with our own reality' (2007: 38), whilst artistic re-enactment's '[...] reference to the past is not history for history's sake; it is about the relevance of what happened in the past for the here and now' (2007: 38).

One of the earliest discussions on re-enactment within theatre came from Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks in their book on theatre and archaeology in 2001, the same year that Rebecca Schneider published her influential article on re-enactment, 'Performing Remains', which she would revisit ten years later in her book, after a period that would see expansive change and developments in the field. Schneider, though writing after Pearson and Shanks, does not discuss their contribution to the discussion; however, the two do have crossovers in their approach to historical re-enactments.

Pearson and Shanks investigate the crossover between the fields of performance and archaeology and examine, amongst other notions, the idea of re-enactment within performance. For them, the aim of re-enactment 'whether it is recognised or not, is to construct something new out of old, to connect what may appear dissimilar in order to achieve new insights and understandings' (2001: 52), rather than presenting an authentic replica of the past. They too speak of the distinction between historical and theatrical re-enactments, stating:

Dramatic replication of the past is fraught with difficulties. Theatre is constituted as a sophisticated system of simulation, of illusion of place and person. Its nature is towards inauthenticity; our distance from the stage precludes the need for exact similitude. We accept the codes of representation. Sadly, re-enactment at heritage sites recurrently takes the conventions of stage practice [...] and applies them in contexts where they are singularly inappropriate and where the spectator is asked to accept their very inauthenticity as authentic [...] (2001: 117).

Schneider specifically looks to historical re-enactment of battles because '[...] the questions I brought to the battlefield concerned the pose, imposture, and the replay of evidence (photographs, documents, archival remains) back across the body in gestic negotiation' (2011:

9).¹⁹ A primary concern of Schneider's is the notion of time and its return and its relationship to the '[...] reenactment, reenactor, original, copy, event, re-event, bypassed, and passer-by [...]' (2011: 10). Schneider notes that '[f]or many history reenactors, reenactments are more than "mere" remembering but are in fact the on-going event itself, negotiated through sometimes radically shifting affiliation with the past *as* the present' (2011: 32).²⁰

The notion that is shared by all the scholars discussed is that there is a distinction to be made between historical and theatrical or artistic re-enactments. All argue that the former tend to favour a replication of the past, whereas the latter employ re-enactment to consider what the re-enacting and re-representing of materials can offer the present or indeed the future.

1.7 RE-ENACTMENT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO PERFORMANCE, SITE AND ARCHIVE

I wish to look briefly at examples of artistic re-enactments, considering their relationship to the 'original' event they depict, the site in which these events took place and the archive of materials they left behind. Among the examples are Jeremy Deller's *The Battle of Orgreave* (2001)²¹ and Rod Dickenson's *Milgram Re-enactment* (2002), a restaging of the infamous

¹⁹ Gestic negotiation is a term Schneider discusses in *The Explicit Body in Performance* (1997). In this book, Schneider argues that the feminist artists she examines deal with 'gestic negotiation of the body', with the notion of 'gestic' referring to Brecht's term 'Gestus'.

²⁰ The argument here is that some re-enactors believe that the Civil War was never fully resolved and is therefore not in the past; the re-enactment is a marker of the idea that the event continues into the present, with one re-enactor stating, as cited by Schneider: "The Civil War isn't over, and that's why we fight" (in Schneider 2011: 33).

²¹ 'For years I had had this idea to re-enact this confrontation that I had witnessed as a young person on TV, of striking miners being chased up a hill and pursued through a village. After two years' research, the re-enactment finally happened, with about eight-hundred historical re-enactors and two-hundred former miners who had been part of the original conflict. Basically, I was asking the re-enactors to participate in the staging of a battle that occurred within living memory, alongside veterans of the campaign. I've always described it as digging up a corpse and giving it a proper post-mortem, or as a thousand-person crime re-enactment.' (Deller: 2001).

Milgram Experiment.²² First, though, I will consider one of the first theatrical re-enactments to be written about in a scholarly context (see, for example, Babbage 2000): Stan's Cafe's restaging in 1999 of Impact Theatre Cooperative's *Carrier Frequency* (1984).²³ This re-enactment was made from watching video footage of the original. Stan's Cafe's Artistic Director, James Yarker, has been cited as saying: 'We have tried to be true to the video, being aware at the same time that the video may not be true to the show' (in Babbage 2000: 98). The company restaged Impact's performance with the help of the video documentation, Russell Hoban's original script and Graeme Miller's soundtrack, whilst acknowledging that what they were creating was not necessarily a "true" image of the original. Pearson therefore proposes that Stan's Cafe's approach offered '[...] not acts of reconstruction, but of recontextualization. They stand *for* the past, *in* the present' (2000: 98). The use of the archive and the site of the original work in the restaging was ambiguous. Reflecting on the event thirteen years later, Yarker remembers that: 'After our first performance one of the original cast happened to mention that in their version they had dyed the water a murky blue with fabric dye and thus emerged discoloured from the pool at the end of each performance' (Yarker: 2012), a fact they could not have derived from the grainy black and white video. The archive was important to the restaging, but limited in the access it allowed to the event that was shown within the documentation. Here the site too was re-staged, constructed within another site.

In the case of *The Battle of Orgreave* and *The Milgrim Re-enactment*, both were restagings of politically charged events in history. They also both, as Arns and Horn claim,

²² The original experiment was conducted in 1961 by Stanley Milgram, and Rod Dickinson explains how the experiment was largely scripted and that Milgram staged '[...] a bizarre theatre of cruelty: the tested persons were led to believe that they were assisting an experimenter in finding out if giving electric shocks to a person behind a partition every time he gave a wrong answer to a question would increase the percentage of correct answers' (in Arns and Horn 2007: 109) However, the tested persons were misled, and the aim was to see how far they would go with the "electric shocks" if given an instruction by an authority figure. This was less than twenty years after the Second World War and was conceived in response to philosopher Hannah Arendt's work on the "banality of evil", a phrase she coined whilst witnessing the trial of Adolf Eichmann. It refers to the way in which the perpetrators of the Holocaust evaded a sense of personal responsibility for their deeds by referring to instructions given from someone higher in the hierarchy.

²³ *Carrier Frequency* is based on a post-apocalyptic text by Russell Hoburn.

raised the question: ‘as to what really happened beyond the history as it is portrayed by media’ (2007: 9). Through the media, history is inevitably manipulated – the archive therefore, which is used for historical re-enactments, is insufficient for an understanding of the event. The re-enactment becomes a way in which to seek out the truth of a past event. Steve Rushton talks of Deller’s attempt to engage the ‘[...] mediation of memory; how memory is an entity which is continuously being reconstructed [...]’ (2005: 10), thus emphasising the importance of the mediatisation and mediation of the archival document within re-enactment. Rod Dickenson discusses his re-enactment (with a company of performers) in 2002 of the *Milgram experiment* as a restaging of a restaging: he calls the 1961 experiment itself ‘[...] in a sense a World War Two re-enactment, inspired by the Eichmann Trial and Hannah Arendt’²⁴ (2005: 109). Dickinson’s re-enactment too dealt with memory, historic events and representation of documentation. However, speaking of *The Battle of Orgreave*, Amelia Jones argues that ‘[...] the re-enactment, itself a performance, is plagued by the same encroachment of pastness [...]’ (2011: 26).

Arns and Horn note how Deller’s re-enactment of the miner’s strike was about people who had been involved in the strike, returning ‘[...] to the place of trauma’, what is important to note about this is the role that site played in the re-enactment; by returning to the site, those that were involved in the strike were able to ‘replay their personal memories’ (2007: 47), which, they argue, goes further than Dickenson’s aim in the *Milgram Re-enactment* to turn the ‘[...] past into a stage play’ (2007: 47). But both Deller and Dickenson drew extensively on archival material: Dickenson relied on transcripts and papers of the original, and Deller on people’s memories and anecdotes of the miner’s strike of 1984–5. They both thereby reach for a kind of truth, a problematic concept when engaged in artistic re-enactments. Dickenson wanted his audience to become witnesses and thus question their own moral decisions in a kind of

²⁴ See footnote 23

Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt*; and Deller's aim was to effectively right '[...] old wrongs' (Arns and Horn 2007: 49). They both rely on the restaging of singular events, even though they both speak of much wider societal and political issues. This is a common thread within artistic re-enactments: that the singular event gets to stand in for a broader scope of events; and that there is rarely a focus on the place in which the events happened.

1.8 CONCLUSION

This literature review has considered the debates in theatre and performance studies on the themes of site (as addressing the relationship of venue and performance), archive and re-enactment. My overriding concern has been to tease out how these debates have figured the relationship between venue, the performances it hosted and the subsequent archival documents that document this relationship.

I suggest that the current literature on site-specific performance does not take into account sufficiently the issue of site as a place of producing performance. It is worth referring to Hodge and Turner (2012) here, who in their discussion on the topic highlight how artists turned to non-arts sites as a reaction to art institution and in looking for fewer constraints to be placed on their work. However, I suggest, Chapter's history shows that there are models for the ways in which art institutions too have allowed a performance work to be created with relative freedom, by offering an approach that prefigured how site-specific theatre was later to be conceived. The resulting relationship between venue and company and their work can thus be much more symbiotic, akin to the close relationship suggested by the notion of 'site-specificity'. I would also like to call attention to the fact that the issue of the archive (or document) is missing from the debate on site. Clifford McLucas proposed that in Brith Gof's site-specific work the company engaged with a binary approach with their "*architectureeventspace*" (see Pearson 2010). Turner explains how subsequently: 'McLucas

found it necessary to also introduce a third term into his analysis, by acknowledging the presence of the wider public, the audience as “witness”. All three elements are “active agents” (Pearson)’ (2015: 176). McLucas’s tripartite model includes host, ghost and witness or – in Pearson’s words – ‘1 the performance; 2 the place; 3 the public’ (Pearson: 2010: 37). In an early essay on Brith Gof’s site-specific practice, Pearson describes how the performances ‘fold together place, performance and public’, having ‘no natural edges or frame to hold their identity discrete, no stage backdrop against which their outlines might be thrown into crisp focus and they do not rely on containment for their identity and integrity’ (Pearson 1997: 97). Pearson later argues that it is this ‘deep engagement of these elements that constitute site specific works’ (2010: 37). I adopt a similar tripartite model, but mine includes in the place of the audience the documents (of past performances as well as the venue that hosted them) as a kind of ‘witness’, held in archives. I am interested in considering the archive not as a place where boxes of documents are held, but as buildings that continue to be occupied by the ghosts of previous events. I propose that in reflecting on the relationship between physical site, past performances *and* archives that give us access to a venue’s operations, a certain understanding of past performance work can be illuminated and perhaps invoked for futurity.

I propose that the literature on ghosting is a possible step forward in identifying how venues relate to memory, specifically to the memories of performance. It is clear from discussions offered by Carlson and Shaughnessy that archival traces and memories are embedded into how theatre is read and received within the context of a venue. Gotman’s discussion on the venue as archive is a further step in thinking how venues are able to engage in and illuminate their history by addressing the physical site. What I am interested in the following is to examine how in the case of Chapter, the venue might become a canvas on which to reach back and understand how work was created by looking to its performance history. This

has the potential to allow the venue to look at former approaches to working in order to inform its future.

With regards to discussion on performance and the archive, I wish to propose that what is currently missing from this debate is a consideration of the building that houses the archival documents and the building that originally housed the live events that are documented in the archive. I have examined how scholars perceive the archive in performance studies, and although there has been much work on the topic by scholars such as Schneider (2011), Taylor (2003) and Roms (2013), I suggest that there is still scope to think further about the documents that have become an archive within an arts venue, and what this means for the venue as a locus of performance history and future, particularly with regard to the potential of reaching back to former approaches to working.

Finally, my discussion of re-enactment, especially of projects such as *The Carrier Frequency*, *The Milgram Re-enactment* and *The Battle of Orgreave*, has opened up the question of how artists have dealt with the restaging of past events—“the how and the why” being at the centre of the discussion. Again, there is a clear gap within this debate – whilst the role of documentation for the performance of re-enactment is clearly visible, there is a noticeable absence when it comes to the site, except for Deller’s re-enactment where the site was bound to the re-enactment, yet it still privileged the singular event.

Re-enactment has played a major role within the arts over the past ten years. In an age of digitisation it is becoming an increasingly popular device with which to preserve art history. The crossover to archive practice is clearly evident here, and the two sit side by side comfortably; after all one needs documentation (the archive) in order to re-enact. However, much artistic re-enactment of past performance work has been dealing with restaging performances from a period (the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s) when documentation of performance work was either actively discouraged or not considered, or too expensive. This is perhaps the

reason behind the growing obsession with re-enactment – if we accept that art should be ephemeral, how do we justify its existence in a time when art has to? Archival practices and re-enactments are arguably one way with which to prove the existence of performance and its worth – not in a way that damages the integrity of past work but that allows the significance to re-emerge. Re-enactments are a link to our past, but they are also a connector to our present and our future. They not only prove the existence of something significant, they also demonstrate its need for today and allow a re-evaluation of a significant period and reinterpret it for today.

Throughout this thesis, I shall continue to deliberate on the contemporary relevance of a venue's relationship to its past performances, and how, through engaging in the tripartite approach, I may offer a transferable methodology for venues to engage in their own performance histories. In combining the three areas of scholarly debate outlined in this literature review, I aim to establish what an understanding of the relationship between venue, performance and archival document offers to our understanding of a venue's history.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGIES: FROM CASE STUDIES ON VENUES TO THE MERGING OF PRACTICES

PART 1: THE VENUES

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The main focus of the research project lies within a methodological exploration: what methods can or must be applied in order to understand and communicate the relationship between a venue and the history of the performances staged there? What does each method reveal about this relationship? How do they complement one another? To this end, the thesis has applied three main approaches.

The first method has utilized more traditional forms of historical enquiry, namely archival research, supplemented by oral history interviews. Through these I have collected and collated information on Chapter Arts Centre in the 1970s and its experimental theatre programme. This information has been compiled into a linear historical account of Chapter's performance history in the 1970s, with a focus on its early years and its shift in programming policy in 1977, which draws on a range of documentary sources.

The second method consists of three Practice-as-Research enquires that each consider the tripartite relationship of venue – performance – document. The two methodological approaches are distinct but complementary as both seek the same information, but from different angles and for different purposes. Robin Nelson raises the issue that '[s]ome practice-as-research (PaR) projects that advance the idea of 'embodied knowledge' pose a challenge [...] to the privileging of mind over body in the Western intellectual tradition in respect of the locus of knowledge' (2006: 105). What this thesis attempts to do is to oscillate between the two approaches – that is, between the approach of historical research and the approach based on a praxis of embodiment – to suggest that the two can enable one another in the production of knowledge. Using thus a collection of methods, this methodology attempts to augment the

way in which to approach documents and memories, resulting in both material (written) and ephemeral (performance) outcomes using a reconstructive approach.

But I will begin this reflection on methodology with a third method, namely a close analysis of cases where artists or scholars working in and out of venues have engaged in the activation of a venue's archive through forms of performance. This will help me assess what has already been done in this field, to evaluate techniques and finally to analyse if and how the venue was considered in the work undertaken.

Part two of this account of my methodology then goes on to outline my own approach to reconstructing the relationship between venue – performance - document, whether within or away from the physical place in question.

2.1 VENUES AND THEIR ARCHIVE

I begin this section by examining the methodologies employed by Heike Roms in her engagement with the history of Chapter and in her work with the Trace Collective. Roms has undertaken crucial practice-based experiments, engaging with performative archiving with both Chapter and Trace Collective. I will follow this with a discussion of my interviews with key people involved in projects relating to the archives at Arnolfini (Bristol) and the CCA (Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow), two venues of comparable age to Chapter, to establish how the history of other venues has been considered and activated. This includes interviews with academic and artist Paul Clarke, archivist Julian Warren and artist Clare Thornton, who all discuss projects that reused archive materials at Arnolfini; and an interview with Francis McKee, CCA's Artistic Director. I aim to develop a sense of how venues that house their own archive (as Chapter does) or engage with it (which to date Chapter has not yet done) have found ways in which to remake, reanimate, re-enact archival material, or to simply make their archive experiential for an audience. This chapter is therefore an investigation into artistic practices of archive engagement in which the venues were actively involved.

2.2 CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE

Heike Roms has been undertaking a long-term, major research enquiry into the history of performance art in Wales, under the title '*It was forty years ago today*': *Locating the early history of performance art in Wales, 1965 – 1979*. The history of Chapter has been central to this research and is one that Roms has engaged with directly via the creation of several performative interventions.

One such intervention is the aforementioned *How to Build an Arts Centre? An Audio Guided-Tour* (2011). Roms recorded the memories of three protagonists of Chapter's early history: co-founder Christine Kinsey, performance maker Mike Pearson and former technical manager Dave Hutton. Recorded on site, the audio footage was then edited into a sound work, which guided its audience (via headphones) on an audio tour of the building that took them to front-of-house areas and back corridors (see Roms: 2011). What is important for this project is the fact that the interviews were recorded on-site – and so the memories of the interviewees were elucidated as they walked through the spaces of Chapter, spaces in which they made or saw numerous performances. In the resulting audio walk, the audience was able to walk those same spaces and be made aware of those memories. In this instance, the presence of the venue was vital; it was directly connected to the memories in question, and its physical presence would have aided the memories to materialise. This intervention into Chapter's physical spaces could be regarded as a site-specific approach, because of the way the physical spaces were used to call upon memories; architecture was indeed bound to the event, as discussed by Pearson (2010) and Kaye (2000) (see previous chapter). Furthermore, Roms's methodology has utilized oral history as an approach to generate performance work that responds to spaces and to venues. By engaging in oral histories, Roms took advantage of the fact that the people from the time period in which she was interested are still alive (and in the case of Pearson and Kinsey, both still active artists). Making use of this kind of technique highlights two things: Firstly, that the

history of an arts centre can be accessed through myriad ways and not just through official archival research; and secondly, that the voices themselves can be used as signposts for memory and activation as they can act as a strong lead into reaching back to understand a venue's relationship to its events. Rather than attempting to re-enact former artistic projects, what Roms did was to create new work by using the voices of the artists and technicians associated with Chapter as a way to lead an audience on a guided memory walk that emphasised Chapter as both a historical and a present-day venue.

Another of Roms's projects that engaged with Chapter's history was *Marking Time: a Coach Trip into Cardiff's Performance Past* (2013), for which she collaborated with Mike Pearson. (It was within the framework of this project that I was able to develop *Playing (at) Woyzeck*, a short Practice-as-Research experiment that examined the archives of Pip Simmons's 1977 production of *Woyzeck* at Chapter.) For their performance, Roms and Pearson created a coach tour that guided audience members to sites significant to the history of performance in Cardiff. At each spot a small performative intervention took place that engaged its audience in the space's connection to a particular past performance event. The tour ended in Chapter, where my intervention was performed. Through visiting historical performance venues, Roms and Pearson conjured up past events and filled the spaces with participants who had been present at the original event, alongside those that were new to the history and that were able to respond to the memories that were being shared – therefore generating new memories of old events; and more importantly framing the interventions as new events generated memories of new performance work. *Playing (at) Woyzeck* is discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four, however, it would be appropriate at this point to draw attention to an interesting reaction to my performance. Some audience members who had also been present at the original performance of Pip Simmons' *Woyzeck*, in 1977 at Chapter, after seeing my performance shared their thoughts on the original work and suggested that I in fact had “got it

wrong”. My work was not an exercise in mimesis, and to accurately restage the work was never its aim. But the working of memory, remembering and misremembering, and the differences between remembered events and restaged events subsequently has come to play a key part in my research. Like Roms in her audio piece, I too rely on the interplay with and playful potential of creating new work that arises from (mis)remembering in my practice-as-research experiments, as I will discuss in Chapter Four.

Roms’s work on Chapter has responded to the venue in various ways, and throughout her investigations the significance of the venue has remained central. In *How to Build an Arts Centre? An Audio Guided-Tour* the geography of the building acted as a mnemonic prompt and therefore allowed the audience members to physically trace the work that was being evoked through the oral histories; in this sense the venue was being addressed and utilized as its own archive. In *Marking Time*, the whole of Cardiff was used as the site, but the physicality of each of the buildings that were visited was again addressed as a trace of past performance events. Making *Playing (at) Woyzeck* part of a journey that highlighted the significance of Cardiff’s involvement in the history of experimental performance practice also allowed Chapter’s involvement in this history to be emphasised.

2.3 TRACE

Remaining in Cardiff I will now move on to the work of Trace Collective, in particular their performance piece, *Trace: Displaced*. The Cardiff-based Trace Collective emerged from the work of Trace Gallery, a privately run gallery located in the residential house of artist, André Stitt. Stitt had set up the gallery in 2002 as a space where ‘[...] like minded artists [could] push the envelope’ (2006: 8). Between 2002 and 2008, Trace presented a monthly live performance by an international performance artist; this was followed by the exhibition of the material remains of the performance in the space as an installation for several weeks. Stitt writes how

‘[t]hrough Trace, the domestic and private meets the public to create an interface that brings the international and global experience to a special space in the local community’ (2006: 9). Stitt also notes how ‘[a]t Trace the seemingly leftover or discarded matter from performance activity is offered up for contemplation and reflection in relation to contemporary artists’ exploration and research’ (2011: 9). This offers a rich case study on which to reflect on for my own practice as I too look at material that on first glance might not appear to offer much in regards to research and creativity. But as will become clear, it is often the mix of documentary remnants that together aid in creating new insights or offer interesting texts or images with which to work.

With *Trace: Displaced* (2008), the group that had run the gallery together (Stitt, together with fellow artists Phil Babot, Eddie Ladd and Beth Greenhalgh, and Heike Roms) decided to not just present the work of others, but to create a piece of performance together. The work saw the group create a scale-model of Trace’s Cardiff gallery space at the Tramway in Glasgow, as part of the *National Review of Live Art*. Stitt writes how:

[a]s this new investigation developed it was agreed that we would work with an architect to realise a physical displacement of the TRACE space itself. That the physical space that is TRACE, when extracted from its domestic relationship as part of a terraced house in Cardiff, would become a container of sorts (2011: 11)

This experiment was created so that Trace Collective could ‘[...] undertake a series of investigations and actions [...]’ (2011: 10) in this replica space. Roms’s role was to ‘mediate the work via the position of a specific archivist-observer-performer’ (2011: 10). She also acted as ‘[...] an interface with the public; creating ‘live’ reportage through textual examination’ and ensuring ‘[...] public participation through note taking, photographic documentation, and conversation’ (2011: 11). Roms’s contribution was concerned with the remnants of the group’s performance in the space; Stitt notes that by working with these remains what was created was ‘a living archive’ which focused ‘on process, events and experiences – traces that embody that fragile quality where the object itself is imbued with the performance that created it’ (2011: 9).

What is emphasized by this example is the relationship between document and venue. In recreating a scale-model version of the Trace space, the collective sought to reimagine the gallery, to take the experiences that had taken place in Cardiff at a unique domestic art space and to recreate the same experience within another art space. Here the focus was on the venue, but the venue was rearticulated as a model, a representation of the original site. This became the inspiration for my own approach when creating *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, where I explored if a space that was representative of another could become a container for Chapter's history to be narrated.

Roms's techniques and approaches (in her own research and through her work with Trace Collective) have been instrumental in informing this research's methodology. The use of oral histories and the role they can play in new work is a useful and rich method with which to experiment. What has been interesting to think about for my research is how oral histories and archives that are displaced can be brought together when considering the history of a venue and its relationship to its past performance. Again, this is something I explore through my final practice-as-research experiment, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*.

2.4 ARNOLFINI

In 2006, Arnolfini and Bristol University launched a project entitled *Performing the Archive: The Future of the Past*.²⁵ This was a collaborative research project led by Paul Clarke, Simon Jones (Bristol) and Nick Kaye (Exeter). The project '[...] aimed to explore how academics and artists use and reuse documents of past events, to inflect and inspire their own performance practice and discourse' (Clarke 2013: 364). The project was hosted by the University of Bristol's Live Art Archives, and the Arnolfini's own archive.

²⁵ *Performing the Archive: the future of the past* is a three year research project based in the University of Bristol Theatre Collection Live Art Archives and the Arnolfini Live archives of Arnolfini Gallery (Bristol), partnered with Exeter University Department of Drama (http://www.bris.ac.uk/theatrecollecton/liveart/liveart_GWR_project.html) [accessed 12 May 2014].

Julian Warren, who was appointed as Arnolfini's first archivist in 2006, was also involved in both a curatorial and artistic capacity within the project, rather than a mere catalogue of historical documents. And Clarke carried out the Practice-as-Research element of the Performing the Archive enquiry in collaboration with Tom Marsham, Clare Thornton, and additional guests as the Performance Re-enactment Society (PRS).²⁶

Paul Clarke has a long-standing interest in performance's relationship with archives, working on practice-based enquiries into the subject through the Performance Re-enactment Society as well as involving himself in academic and artistic projects with other artists and scholars. Among Clarke's projects on the theme are *The Pigs of Today are the Hams of Tomorrow*, which took place at the *Live Laboratory Symposium*, Plymouth Arts Centre in 2010; a panel at the *National Review of Live Art* in Glasgow in the same year titled *Remembering Performance* (and involving Heike Roms), and the *Abandoned Practices* workshop at Chicago's School of Art Institute. Clarke explains how these events '[...] brought together artists and academics to discuss ways in which performance remains present, how live works are remembered and continue to circulate in culture' (2013: 363), asking and exploring key questions about the role of reusing documents for current artistic practices. Projects that ensued included *Reperform* (2009), which focused on the activation of memories of audience members. They were invited to share reminiscences of any performance they had seen; no timeframe was specified or certain types of performance privileged over another – for example, memories of concerts, performance art, plays and musicals were recalled. The emphasis was on the audience rather than the event. Thematically, this project was followed by *Untitled Performance Stills* (2009), which took place in Plymouth. Clarke describes this as allowing '[...] public participants to think through their interactions, about the relationship between

²⁶ 'The Performance Re-enactment Society (PRS) is an occasional collective of artists, archivists and researchers, who use archival documents and audience's memories to revive past art experiences and create them anew' (Thornton: 2013).

memory and the archive, performance and its documents; and about issues of preservation, lineage, and how influence passes through generations' (2013: 365). How performance history can be influential over generations is a particular concern for my own project as I reach back to consider how practices of the past can influence experiences of today.

For *Untitled Performance Stills*, audiences were asked to bring in props that represented a moment from art or performance history and then re-enact that moments for a photo-shoot. The photos were then exhibited. The re-enactments thus created a new archive which became part of the circulation of performance art history. The methodological approach of the PRS privileged memory and its vagaries over the authoritative document, which suggests that for many – audiences and artists alike – the history of performance resides in something less tangible and less authoritative, and perhaps more personal than in a document or a building. Clarke states that this project '[...] enabled public participants to think through their interactions, about the relationship between memory and the archive, performance and its documents, and about issues of preservation [...]' (2013: 365). Clarke argues that '[t]he photos were not attempts at reconstruction but photos of people's enactments of their memories of performances' (2013: 366).

Untitled Performance Stills was primarily focused on audience and memory, an area that has often been covered within the debate on performance and disappearance. Adrian Heathfield and Andrew Quick suggest that '[i]f memory ensures that something remains, then representation enables the remainders to endure, to be perceivable' (2000: 1). This idea is further explored by Matthew Reason who suggests that:

All documents and traces of live performance must be considered as presenting cultural, political and artistic understandings and values of the abilities, traditions and objectives of the representing media. As a result it is possible to apply a visual, verbal, media-specific discourse analysis to a consideration of how these representations constitute live performance and how they communicate transience in permanence, movement in stillness, presence in absence, disappearance in documentation (Reason 2006: 236).

The binaries that Reason highlights are all part of the process of locating, identifying and deciphering the remains of a venue's past and must be considered. A consideration of how remains communicate, and what they communicate, is important to this discussion as they all potentially shed light on the attempt to understand a venue's relationship to its past work, especially through a practice-based methodology that seeks to reconstruct and re-enact materials to uncover a theatrical history.

2.5 PROJECT #1 – *COVER-ED AND SALAD DRESSING*

Cover-ed and Salad Dressing (2011) was a performative work by the Performance Re-enactment Society, Tom Sowden & Michalis Pichler and Arnolfini Archive, performed at Arnolfini, in response to Ed Rescha's bookwork *Crackers* (1969). In an interview I conducted with Clarke and Warren (2014) (who were both co-creators of the work), they remember how they began thinking about:

[...] the relationship between books and performance, and thinking about books as performative and instructive, and I think our series was called 'Things to do with books' [...] we were thinking about a book as something that you do as well as read
(Clarke and Warren: 2014).

They continue by stating that this was also part of '*animating the archive*', explaining that, *Crackers is an Ed Ruscha book that is a photo story, a kind of photo novel that's his realisation of this Mason Williams short story, 'How to get maximum enjoyment from Crackers'* (Clarke and Warren: 2014).²⁷

²⁷ 'Ruscha also worked with narrative in his artists' books. His 1969 book *Crackers* is based on a short story by musician Mason Williams, "How to Derive the Maximum Enjoyment from Crackers," which is printed in tiny text on the back cover. Photographed as though it were a collection of film stills, it served as the basis for Ruscha's 1971 film "Premium". Without words, the black & white photographs feature a man making preparations in a cheap hotel room before picking up his date for the evening. The date must have gone very well, since he and the woman end up at the hotel. The man then manages to coax the confused woman into lying in the hotel bed covered in lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, and olives, and proceeds to pour a large bucket of salad dressing over her body. The man finds he has forgotten crackers to top his "salad" and leaves the woman in the bed while he goes to the store and purchases a box. The final scene shows the man having checked himself in to a much ritzier hotel room, lying alone in a much nicer bed, smiling and eating his crackers. One can't help but wonder what became of that poor, oil & vinegar-soaked woman' (Evenhaugen: 2012).

In a statement by the Performance Re-enactment Society, the work and the order of events is described as:

Cover-ed is a series of curatorial and creative interventions into and around Ed Ruscha and Mason Williams' iconic 1969 photo novel Crackers, a copy of which is held in Arnolfini's Archive. Over two months this bookwork became the script, score, instruction, and inspiration for a three-day performance of photography, a participatory performance event, an installation, an evening of talks and a new bookwork called Salad Dressing. 3 – 5th March: photoshoot and open studio, Arnolfini Reading Room. 15 March – 1st May: Follow-ed (After Hokusai) Previous re-makes, rip-offs and re-creations of Ed Ruscha bookworks were displayed in the set of the new cover version of Crackers. 24 March: Re-use, Re-make, Re-enact! An evening of talks and performative readings. 20 April, book launch and performance. The final chapter of the new book work, Salad Dressing, took the form of a participatory event at the book launch [...] Salad Dressing, the 40-page artist's bookwork, is published by Arnolfini and distributed by Cornerhouse. Part of the gallery's 50th anniversary exhibitions. (Clarke, P, Tom, S & (PRS), PRS 2011, 'Cover-ed')

Clarke and Warren note in the interview how *'the idea was to remake the bookwork'* (2014), highlighting that what they were engaged in was both a "re-doing" event and an animation of past documents. What remained on the periphery was the consideration of the venue in which their event took place, in this case the Arnolfini. Perhaps this is due to the fact that the Arnolfini has changed buildings and so it does not have the same embedded historical memory as other venues.²⁸ Their approach was about taking the book as a score, which took the material as being cohesive from the beginning of their process, rather than collecting and deciphering disconnected material, as many archivist-performers would do. Such a score-based methodology would prove to be crucial to the reconstruction of Chapter's history in my project: the use of an archive as the script and score for a resultant performance work is a technique I would later adopt for my own practice in *Playing (at) Woyzeck*.

²⁸ The Arnolfini moved to its current location in 1975, see: <http://www.arnolfini.org.uk/about/arnolfini-history/> for further information. [Date Accessed: 13th September 2016].

Warren explained how there had been a whole series of performative remakes of Ed Rescha's books, but none (that they knew of at the time) of *Crackers*. The PRS remake was performed in the Reading Room of Arnolfini, where the company built a hotel room, which was the setting of the book. Here, they conducted a photoshoot. As Clarke explains:

[...] in the photoshoot – the rephotoshoot of Crackers [...] they're (the actors) holding the Ed Ruscha book as a kind of score, whilst trying to get the positions right, posing the images. So that was open, it was an open studio, people could come and spectate the photoshoot and it was interesting that it took place here, whereas in the original I assume that the hotel room was a real hotel room. This was a kind of recontextualised hotel room' (Clarke and Warren: 2014).

After the photoshoot the hotel room was opened and visitors could come and lie on the bed and read a copy of *Crackers*, enabling them to interact with both the setting and the book. What is interesting here is the stratification of performative outcome. Firstly, the reconstruction of the hotel room using, as Clarke and Warren explained, bedding from the Premiere Inn hotel chain, which recontextualised the book and contemporarised the restaging. Secondly, opening the room to spectators to sit on the bed and read the bookwork allowed an interaction with the setting and invited a heightened liveness to the book. Thirdly, this was only one part of the remake, as Clarke and Warren explain:

[...] an event then happened – Re-use, Re-make, Re-enact, was a symposium around the project, and invitations were then circulated for the book launch, so the final chapter of the book took place as an event at the book launch. There was an intervention into the book launch, which was the final chapter. We had stayed as closely as we could to the Mason Williams and Ed Ruscha's images' (Clarke and Warren: 2014).

The strategies with which Clarke and Warren devised the work were reliant on the past documents. The idea of using archives to generate a kind of score is also embedded in my practice.

For their remake, PRS changed the name of the piece from *Crackers* to *Salad Dressing*; and 'what you see when you arrive [...] is the woman walking down the stairs [...] wearing a

dress entirely made of salad' (Clarke and Warren: 2014). Clarke explains how this was a participatory event, *the canapés are salad dressings that audience can eat with the dress – which is made of salad leaves*. (Clarke and Warren: 2014). This participation broadened the event and allowed the audience to be reminded of the re-contextualised materials. Ruscha's original narrative leaves the fate of the women unknown; in their remake, PRS not only brought a liveness to the book, but they also brought alive the woman from the story, and presented her off the page to an audience, thus shifting the original intention of the story. The dramaturgical implications of this are worth noting, as this performative adaptation can be read as a feminist statement as it gave the female figure agency that she lacked in the original story.²⁹ This recontextualisation is important, as it empowered the secondary figure from the original story. Although I am not dealing with the same gender issues in my research, it has been interesting to think about ways of providing Chapter with more of an authorial voice and agency in my performance practice.

Judging by the accounts the artists gave of the work, the place and spaces used in Arnolfini seemed to have been of secondary concern. With regards to the venue it was utilised in a way that was contextually appropriate for the activation of the bookwork. As noted previously, the Reading Room (which is used for the storage of past bookworks) was used as a hotel room in which to shoot the scenes from the book; in this instance the book was connected to the venue simply by being housed there. Clarke and Warren explained how the Arnolfini has an extensive range of bookworks in their onsite bookshop, and so creating books from live works and exhibitions became part of their own process, allowing them to add to the cycle of Arnolfini's tradition. The subsequent events all took place at Arnolfini, yet the venue was simply used as a place in which the events could happen; other than being located in the Reading Room the venue was not used as a means to activate the work. Perhaps this was due

²⁹ See footnote 29.

to the fact that the bookwork (and story) did not have a direct relationship to the venue, other than the venue being the host of the book.

2.6 PROJECT #2 – GROUP SHOW

In *Group Show* (2012), which was also performed by PRS, the focus shifted over to the venue: ‘Group Show is selected from an imagined Arnolfini collection of visual art and performance, bringing together works from different times that were not originally shown together, as a new event’ (Arnolfini: 2012) Paul Clarke reflects how he:

did a lot of archival work with Julian and the records office working with the slides of the exhibitions’ What ended up happening was in the empty galleries [...] we exhibited the work at a time that the galleries were empty. When you arrived at the gallery you would be greeted by one of the invigilators (I worked with Arnolfini’s invigilators) and they performed the work and the work only manifested itself through their descriptions. They had a script that was a script of descriptions of works that had previously been shown in exhibitions at Arnolfini. Rather than be chronological or following a particular thematic, they were sort of associate threads, works that had insects in or works that used the material of water. There were a series of performance works as well. But basically they, the work would be manifested through your imaginings and their descriptions of the work. It would be a kind of guided tour, a guided tour of absent works, of works not present [...]. People gesturing towards blank spaces. (Clarke and Warren: 2014).

What is striking about this piece in particular is the relationship it established to the spaces within the Arnolfini building. Inviting the invigilators to ‘perform’, using a script of events not in chronological order, allowed the focus to be on the temporality of the actual present event rather than on absent past events. The venue was needed in this case because the document was visually absent. The venue here was viewed as its own archive, as it was drawing on past work (that themselves would have become part of the archive), but the works were absent, leaving only the venue to speak of them. The performance would arguably not have had the same resonance without the presence of the venue because the physical spaces would have acted as visual mnemonics with which to visualise the work being described. This therefore illuminates an understanding about the relationship between the work described and the venue.

A further segment of *Group Show* featured solo artist and PRS member Tom Marshman, whose piece was performed in the dressing rooms at Arnolfini. After conducting interviews with performers from previous Arnolfini shows he retold their accounts of preparing for performances. This again draws attention to the venue (as well as its artists) as the dressing rooms are both literally the spaces in which artists would have prepared for performances at the Arnolfini, and also represent the spaces in which to prepare for performance in general. It invited the audience into the intimate areas of a venue and therefore shifted their perception of the public to the private, and from the performance to its preparation.

Group Show's focus was arguably entirely on the venue itself, as the works were absent; however, it could be argued with equal legitimacy that the focus was on the absent works because they were being evoked through the script. In discussing space, Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan asks: 'If people lack a sense of clearly articulated space, will they have a sense of clearly articulated time? Space exists in the present [...] (2008: 119). In reaching back and articulating a past work within the space it belongs, Clarke and Warren were able to play with the sense of present time within a given space. Through a carefully crafted script, *Group Show* evoked past works, and the venue played a large part in that evocation. Space was articulated in the most constructed of ways and shifted the sense of time, bringing the past into the present.

The idea of evoking an absence has played a large part in my own practice on Chapter. I attempt the evocation of an absent place in my third piece of practice-based research, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, which uses similar techniques to those used by PRS in *Group Show*. Through evoking a venue I examine where the sense of "presence" resides – whether it resides in the building itself (as arguably for *Group Show* it did), in the memories of those who were witness to past performances, or in the ghosting of the performance or the document remain. *Group Show* has informed my consideration of the symbiotic relationship between

document and venue, and what I will therefore need to create in order to be able to evoke a sense of place.

2.7 CORRIDORS, STAIRWAYS AND CORNERS

Clare Thornton, in addition to being a member of the Performance Re-enactment Society (PRS) along with Paul Clarke and Tom Marshman, is also a solo artist whose practice involves working with archival documents. She describes her process as:

[...] using a variety of props and materials I devise ‘scenes’ to examine my relationship to certain objects, texts and spaces. Exploring specific locations, libraries and archives I then enact or present my findings playing with memory, materiality and desire (Thornton: 2013).

One of her works that used archives was entitled *Corridors, Stairways and Corners*, which like other works by PRS resulted in a bookwork commission. It was staged at Arnolfini, a venue that, as outlined, has a large collection of bookworks.

Corridors, Stairways and Corners (2013) as a bookwork ‘[...] was produced during a six month period of research within Arnolfini’s dance archive [...]’ (Thornton: 2013). Thornton describes it as ‘[r]e-interpreting the model of a gallery guide or programme note as a kind of score, the book intends to evoke a selection of scenes, actions and movements performed at Arnolfini by an international cast of artists’ (Thornton: 2013). Thornton was keen to learn about the documents stored away ‘*through doing them*’ (Thornton: 2015), as she expressed in an interview with me. Thornton stated elsewhere that the project utilized:

[...] documentary photographs, brochures and programme notes held in the Reading Room. I have selected six performance pieces that took place at Arnolfini between 1976-1998. Employing concrete poetry and cut-up techniques *Stairways, Corridors & Corners* is an invitation to the visitor to revive traces of performance in the building (Thornton: 2013).

The subsequent book produced opens with an invitation: ‘Imagine the building as a body. Top floor, head. First floor, stomach, knees. Ground Floor, feet, ankles’ (Thornton 2013a: 1). This

opening is an invitation into a kind of embodiment that allows the audience to enter and ‘[...] co-create a moment, a memory, a glimpse’ (Thornton 2013a: 1).

In the book, each score begins with a location, time and a procedure. As Thornton was looking at performance events throughout Arnolfini’s history, the book uses one performance from each decade from the 1970s through to the 1990s, although not in chronological order. By responding to the scores from the book the audience can enter the physical spaces of the Arnolfini building and perform the instructions that Thornton had written. The instructions allow the audience (or participants) to locate something that is dislocated or absent from the space they occupy. To further evoke in audience members the awareness of past events, Thornton also created an audio soundtrack consisting of songs from the respective periods in question, which audience members could stream whilst in the physical spaces.

The bookwork for *Corridors, Stairways and Corners* is organised firstly according to location, such as First Floor, Ground Floor or All levels. This is followed by providing the time and the year of the original performance event, followed by an invitation for the participants; examples include, ‘[a]n accumulation with talking, 1 dancer, smooth flexing and rotating joints’ (8) and ‘[s]itting, 2 kitchen stools, 2 dancers, focus on the mid-level of the body’ (Thornton 2013a: 12). The book provides simple instructions for the visitor that allows them to enter into the space and experience the past work through recreating it. Thus making something that has an on-going presence, whether through providing a score or an audio work, enables a venue to continuously engage its audience with its history.

Thornton explains how *Corridors, Stairways and Corners* resulted from research undertaken with the *Performing Documents* research project. She explains that she was ‘*really keen to focus on the Arnolfini exhibition archive, in particular the sculptural exhibitions and installations that had been in the building.*’ She continues: ‘*I was interested in body and sculpture, how I might get to know previous works by doing them. I worked with a dance artist,*

Laura Danekin, to activate that’ (Thornton: 2015). She explains that her brief was to create a ‘live guide’ for Arnolfini, and that the brief was open to interpretation. For *Corridors, Stairways and Corners*, she carried out archival research of Arnolfini’s programmes and took notes of snippets that piqued her interest, and then looked to see if there were any connections that emerged: ‘*I was attracted to artists that had a particular graphical way of presenting their practice and also the body as a sculptural space*’ (Thornton: 2015). After deciding to work in this medium, Thornton explains how she settled on dance works for this project after learning that the Arnolfini was a critical space in which dance artists presented in the 1960s and 1970s, and she wanted to celebrate that in this project.

With *Corridors, Stairways and Corners*, Thornton highlight the significance of the building, stating that ‘*the building is an interesting one because a) it wasn’t the same building and also I was really curious to get people to move through it [...]. Martha³⁰ and I were considering how it would operate as a text if you took it and applied it to another building, and I would really love to do that. [...]*’ Thornton explains that she has sent the bookwork up to Glasgow and speculates that people ‘*[...] are experiencing this and could actually go to any 3 floored place [...] I like the idea that it could apply to any site, just an act of imagination*’ (Thornton: 2015). The building here plays a crucial role but as a nonspecific venue; therefore this cannot act as a method to apply to my own practice. The focus here is on the work itself, and how it can be re-embodied by audience members in a nonspecific space, so that it allows those audience members to establish a connection to the work and a relationship to it and the past, but the specific venue in which is occurred is a secondary concern.

For Thornton it was the physicality of the building that prompted how she would design the response to the past works and ultimately the bookwork. However, the architecture of the building, as Thornton suggests, is merely a blueprint for the bookwork and not a mnemonic

³⁰ Thornton is referring to performer and collaborator, Martha King.

trigger. It was not instrumental in the unfolding of the work, except for the requirement of three floors to respond to the instructions, therefore determining the geographical layout of the bookwork. I suggest that for Thornton the aim was for the building as context to be transferable; whereas I am looking towards the building for doing exactly the opposite. I suggest that instead we should consider the venue as being the physical space in which to present the history and one that also stores it.

2.8 A NOTE ON *SELF PORTRAIT*

Another artistic engagement with Arnolfini's history as a venue was Neil Cummings' *Self Portrait* (2011), which was commissioned as part of Arnolfini's 50th anniversary. Cummings created a colour-coded narrative tour of Arnolfini's spaces, which intended not only to create a story Arnolfini's history and the arts, but to chart wider financial and technological changes that coincided with various artistic events. Speech-bubble like stickers depicted various historical moment during Arnolfini's history; but it went beyond 2011, and speculated on future events up to the venue's 100th year in 2061.

What is interesting about this project is the prominent position occupied by the narrative in the architecture of the building. In moving through the Arnolfini, visitors were in and amongst the spaces of Arnolfini and therefore engaged with the building as a venue. Not only were visitors exposed to an artwork and to Arnolfini's history, but they were also witness to other socio-political events that were happening at the same time – often contextualising the events. It could be suggested here that the building became a visual archive of the past, present and future.

2.9 THE CCA

The Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) opened in Glasgow 1992 in the building that was formerly occupied by The Third Eye Centre. Founded by Scottish playwright Tom McGrath in

1974, The Third Eye Centre was a cutting-edge arts venue, described by *The Guardian* as ‘a shrine to the avant garde’. It quickly became ‘the focus for Glasgow’s counter culture’ (CCA: 2015). The centre closed down in 1991, and was subsequently turned into The Centre for Contemporary Arts, opening a year later. This name, as Francis McKee, CCA’s current artistic director, explained to me in an interview with him, would be a problem for its audience; many people were put off from visiting the new arts centre because the name was too ‘*unforgiving*’ as opposed to the quirkiness of The Third Eye Centre (McKee: 2014).

This case study on CCA is framed slightly differently to my previous study on Arnolfini. Firstly, this discussion is concerned with how one arts centre changed into another while occupying the same space and the shift in agenda and vision necessitated by the change. Secondly, the interview with McKee, veered off into a different set of responses and agendas, considering not so much the artistic projects that were created as the result of an exploration of the archives, although this too was a feature; but more consider the CCA and its relationship (or lack thereof) to The Third Eye Centre. The CCA’s engagement with the archive of its predecessor was about a connection to that history and finding ways in which to invite its former audience back, and indeed to generate a new audience. In looking through the archives, Francis McKee³¹ discovered that the CCA (i.e. the staff that worked there at the time), knew very little of The Third Eye’s history; working with the archives to generate new projects became about learning about the centre’s history and somehow affirming the identity of CCA in reference to the former ethos that so many people had liked about The Third Eye Centre. This went as far as running the café today as it had been run back in the 1970s, as McKee remarks in a *Glasgow Evening Times* interview:

It is all these tiny things that are saying, hang around, you can just be here all the time, and that made it a place where people felt comfortable and that is a good place to breed art. Artists like to work in a place like that. And then the public likes to come

³¹ Along with archivist Carrie Skinner and others at CCA.

and hang out in a place where artists are hanging out. It was getting back to some of that early spirit of the Third Eye (McKee in McManus 28 April: 2015).

It is not always about the artistic work produced, as McKee rightly reflects when he talks about looking at the social and community aspects and activist work that was happening back at The Third Eye Centre. The Third Eye Centre, as McKee noted in our interview, was much more focused on community and had an openness that the CCA did not have in its early days, which is something McKee has since changed; he states that: 'I think that has gone full circle' (McKee in McManus 28 April: 2015). McKee explains that the venue was so synonymous with The Third Eye that it was not until nine years after CCA opened and had undergone some structural renovations that people finally began to refer to it as the CCA. The architecture of the building is embedded into how the public conceptualise the venue; the subsequent work with the archive became less about the physical documents and more about the people who used the space and their memories. McKee talks candidly about how the CCA's audience (or that of Third Eye) taught him much about the venue. In discussing how the engagement began, McKee states that:

I was really interested in the history from a very practical point of view in the CCA, in that we didn't know our own history and the staff didn't know the history or what had happened. We couldn't point anyone to it. And we knew almost nothing of the Third Eye. Except that it was a beloved institution, unlike CCA sometimes. So we wanted to know our own history. [...]

We began looking at the archive and indexed everything. We began to make discoveries such as there were 150 tapes filmed in the 1970s with the first video camera in Scotland that the director bought. This showed the policy of the Third Eye Centre which was "open access". It filmed the daily life of the arts centre and the activities. Artistic activities and performances. That was all useful and the videos in particular gave us an immediacy into exhibitions. We digitised them; we had 150 videos that people had never seen. It was so shocking to actually see people move and walk and talk in the 1970s, and we thought this is the thing to build the archive exhibition around and make the archive visible. So we had a very fast exhibition where we showed all 150 videos, classified them as social art, public, spiritual, and we put all of those videos on monitors in the main space (McKee: 2014).

As can be seen in this example, the focus of the CCA's exploration of its own history is not completely concerned with artistic materials; the films that were shown were framed as artistic through being presented in the gallery space yet their content was mixed, between, as McKee points out, the daily activities of the arts centre and various artistic practices. It is interesting that McKee states that these videos illustrated some of the 'policies' of the Third Eye; a policy he describes as "Open Access" acted as impetus for him to bring that approach to working back to the CCA. This became a concern for my own practice also; attempting to articulate policies such as the residency scheme on which Chapter embarked in the late 1970s would turn out to have its own methodology, as I will discuss in the next two chapters.

The next exhibition at the CCA, which was curated chronologically, invited artists that had exhibited work in the 1980s to come back and create new work. It therefore acknowledged the art centre's past but was very much situated in the present, which is a key aspect to how McKee wanted the CCA to function. The CCA's engagement with its history is not, he insists, about 'nostalgia' but about looking forward.

The CCA's history has been recounted in three 2015 articles in Glasgow's *Evening Times* to mark CCA's (and the Third Eye Centre's) 40th birthday. The first, entitled 'CCA at 40' looked back to the centre when it was the Third Eye. The second was published a day later under the headline 'The Third Eye Centre Evolves into the CCA', and the third was entitled 'Piecing together the history of the Third Eye Centre'. In the articles, McKee stresses the importance of the venue's archive as a means to unlock a history and learn from it for CCA's present operations.

In 'The Third Eye Centre Evolves into the CCA', McKee discusses the function of the archive with which the CCA has been working. He states that:

When the Third Eye was here in the 1970s there was nothing like that in the city. [...] 40 years later and no-one has archived it or can remember what they did [...] And nobody is here who did it originally. It's going back and trying to make sense of that

and then using it to help us. That has reconnected us to that early spirit of the Third Eye, and that has been helpful in regenerating the building
(McKee in McManus, 27 April: 2015).

McKee's approach to engaging with the archive has been an inspiration for my practice and has informed how I approached both *Turning the Spotlight on the People* and *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*. By examining Chapter's approach to making and presenting performances in the 1970s, I hope that Chapter, as a venue today, could tap into its own heritage to devise approaches to working.

The CCA became an important case study for me because what McKee has been doing is actively trying to understand the significance that the venue held for its own past, in order so that it may be utilized as part of current ongoing process of evolution, thus emphasizing the relevance of such historical investigations and considerations. This is a clear example of how past approaches to making and presenting work can be purposefully rearticulated for the purposes of informing the running of an arts centre in the present day.

2.10 CONCLUSION

The case studies discussed in this chapter all have different intentions when working with the archive of a particular venue. The work undertaken at Chapter as part of Heike Roms's research was driven by her interest in researching the history of performance art in Wales; Chapter's involvement was limited to providing a space for both *How to Build an Arts Centre? A Guided Audio-Tour* (2011) and *Marking Time: A Coach Trip into Cardiff's Performance Past* (2013) to take place; neither of these pieces were generated as a result of the people working at Chapter actively desiring to explore or utilize the centre's performance history.

The work undertaken at Arnolfini in the year between 2009 and 2012 was very much focused on what remains of a performance and how those remains might be used to generate new work. This was undertaken at a time when numerous Performance Studies scholars, most

notably Rebecca Schneider (2011), were focusing on notions relating to re-enactment, work that openly informed the projects at Arnolfini.

With CCA it seems there was an interest in the building and its history as an arts centre, as the archival work was carried out in order to find out more about its history in a manner that would engage the public. The Arnolfini's and the CCA's engagement with their archives were arguably shaped to explore the venue's heritage. Although this was not a primary aim of *Performing Documents*, the project still highlights that the Arnolfini was an important factor in many of the cited performance works because it was the venue in which the work took place. Francis McKee at the CCA had a genuine interest in learning what the Third Eye had been; he knew that if he asked people who had attended the venue it might be possible to articulate this history as one consisting of personal experiences. The CCA's work was less concerned with the remnants of specific performance works (as was the focus of exploration at the Arnolfini), but more with the venue itself and its history, its policies, and how perhaps it was perceived differently by people who had frequented the venue as the Third Eye. The building can therefore be viewed as a container of its history.

The insights gained from these case studies demonstrate that there is an underlying concern with the venue both in archival research in performance studies and in artistic archival work. However, there is less emphasis on the venue as a producing site. There remains a gap here in regards to how the venue is considered within these practices and events, and what role the venue could play in bridging the gap between performance history and the historiographic process. I have argued that in the Arnolfini's *Group Show* the venue was crucial to the event – the architecture was integral to the tour. The same can be said for *Self Portrait* that, as discussed, used the corridors and stairways as the work's location; yet what was displayed did not necessarily have a prior relationship with the specific area in which it was located. With the CCA the venue was much more explicitly used; in their first artistic endeavours TV

monitors were placed in the gallery that showed videos of past performances at the Third Eye; the showing of the videos brought back former visitors to the Third Eye and two people who had been responsible for filming the material. McKee recalls how some of these visitors did not come back to the centre to see ‘art work’ per se, but were interested in the fact that the Third Eye was once again being considered. Roms’s *How to Build an Arts Centre? A Guided Audio-Tour* (2011) is arguably the most significant in its reference to a venue and its history, due to what I call its site-specific function. In using the venue as a site with which to recall memories, both Roms’s participants and her audience were able to connect to the architecture of Chapter and consider its relationship to past performance works.

I will incorporate some of the practices mentioned here in relation to the Arnolfini, CCA, Chapter and Trace for my own performative and archival explorations into another alternative venue, namely Chapter Arts Centre. Inspired by Roms, I adopt approaches such as using oral histories by artists involved with Chapter, especially in my Practice-as-Research projects that were displaced from Chapter, as the use of oral history provides the work with more of an authorial voice. Encouraged by Thornton’s *Corridors, Stairways and Corners*, I have attempted to evoke past works and the venue, in this case both Chapter and Camden People’s Theatre. CCA’s approach to looking to the archives to learn about its predecessor, The Third Eye Centre, is an important approach I have also adopted, and I have examined the policies of the venue I evoke through the practice I have created.

PART TWO: MERGING THE WRITTEN AND THE PRACTICE APPROACH

2.11 INTRODUCTION

As Mike Pearson outlines in his book on the city’s performance histories, *Marking Time* (2013), ‘[s]ince the late 1960s, Cardiff has accommodated and nurtured innovative practices of theatre making [...]’ (2013: 5). The book discusses Chapter as one of the venues that played

a pivotal role in the development of innovative theatre. In an effort to unfold and understand Chapter's position in the 1970s within performance history my practice-based research experiments aim to engage with never before seen or heard material that documents this history. The methods of theatre making in the 1960s and 1970s changed significantly, and, as Pearson describes, this period: '[...] witnessed a burgeoning of alternative theatre in Britain, with the appearance of new modes and practices – physical theatre, devised performance, site-specific work, community-engaged events – albeit in nascent forms and rarely identified as such at the time [...]' (2013: 7).

One of the primary reasons for conducting this research through practice is to attempt to negotiate and unpick the different kinds of performance practices that were present in Chapter, and to create new examples of practice that would in some way pay tribute to this history and highlight the importance of the theatre practices that Chapter engaged with in the 1970s. Further still, the aim is to consider the implications of reconstructing the relationship between documents that speak of these practices, the practices themselves and the venue for the present. In this, there are echoes of Pearson/Brookes' performance *Raindogs* (2002),³² a work that was filmed in various urban spaces in Cardiff but brought back to Chapter's theatre for the audience to witness. As Pearson's summarizes, *Raindogs* made '[...] no attempt to re-enact the multitude of events that may have happened [...]; but through its fleeting presence, it served to highlight and increase awareness of the material [...]' (2013: 9 – 10). Pearson goes on to sum up the potential of performance: 'In concatenations of word and image, of factual and fictive, of dramatic and mundane, of aesthetic and ordinary, of hidden and overt, performance might actively encounter and divulge that which escapes [...]' (2013: 10).

³² *Raindogs* was a multi-media performance that incorporated the use of CCTV. It was conceived by Mike Pearson, Mike Brookes and Ed Thomas. Brookes describes it as: 'Drawing on strategies developed across recent works by Brookes and Pearson, 'rain dogs' attempted to re-examine the generation and reading of narrative - both off and onto the city - through the structured layering and juxtaposition of specific threads of video, narrative text, and documentation' Mike Brookes: (<http://www.mikebrookes.com/ambivalence/pearsonbrookes/dogs.htm>). [Date accessed: 30th May 2016].

As will become clear, my own final piece of practice, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, also engages with these binaries and explores the question of what can be expressed and articulated with the remnants of a performance space's history, and how by engaging with those remains we can begin to understand the relationship between a venue and its hitherto unexplored performance history.

2.12 MERGING PRACTICES

I begin though by outlining a historical account of Chapter's theatre programming in the 1970s in the next chapter. This account provides a conventional scholarly, archive-based approach to gathering and collating historical information. Following this is a Practice-as-Research discussion that seeks to interrogate the same material as the historical account but through adopting a more experiential and experimental approach. The notion of the "experiential" in relation to performance practice concerned with history is introduced by Taylor when discussing the annual Fiesta of Tepoztecatl in Mexico that enacts the town's history. She notes how the performance of the fiesta: '[...] distils the significance of historical events in ways that can be felt and experienced, rather than simply understood. The goal, then, is not merely to create an annual "live" event but an event that is alive for the people currently living in the town' (2006: 80). Taylor is referring to how people experience history through embodiment, whereas my proposal is about witnessing an embodiment, and I suggest that this too is something experienced, especially if an audience is somehow involved in the transmission through their interaction or participation with the performance. I will explore how the embodied practice I apply in this research allows for such an experiential engagement.

The approaches of archival research collation and performance dissemination this thesis produces could be viewed as what Kershaw and Nicholson call the interrelationship of 'ephemerality and materiality' (2011: 11). The materiality here lies in the form of written

documents, and the Practice-as-Research is the ephemeral event that responds to these material traces. These apparent contradictory elements co-exist within this thesis, each informing and adding to the other in a symbiotic relationship. They should not be read as separate approaches to this research; their methodologies may have followed different paths to arrive at different outcomes, yet the information they were built from are constructed from the same foundational materials. The liveness and immediacy of the Practice-as-Research ephemeral acts in fact locates the past's materiality in the present. Through a process of reconstruction, the archival documentation of Chapter is given a new physical presence that is able to become "experiential". As Taylor notes:

If historical studies cannot legitimate the repertoire of embodied practices, how do historians approach the undocumented "event"? Perhaps this is where performance studies, as a post-disciplinary methodology, comes in—illuminating that disciplinary blind spot that history cannot reach on its own. But we would need to imagine performance studies being able to offer another aspect of history, one grounded in the repertoire as well as the archive, focused on embodied practices that distil meaning from past events, store them, and find embodied modalities to express them in the here-and-now, yet with an eye to the future (2006: 71).

I am not suggesting that Chapter's past is undocumented, as it is from its documents and documentation that I have built much of this research. However, it is the proposal of identifying and employing the tripartite relationship, through performance, that I argue illuminates a past relationship, and how it may, in its own legitimate way and mode of expression, allow for a more experiential and nuanced understanding of a history to be revealed.

2.13 PERFORMING THE HISTORIAN: ARCHIVAL AND ORAL HISTORIES

The process of this research begins with Chapter's own archive, which is a haphazardly organised and inconsistently compiled collection.³³ The labour of firstly locating the sources in the archive involves a careful methodology: identifying and selecting items specifically

³³ I would like to acknowledge here the useful work that had been done by Delyth Edwards, who made a first listing of the items as part of a feasibility study on behalf of the University of Glamorgan under the supervision of Stephen Lacey in 2008.

regarding Chapter's formation and its theatre programming from the 1970s and piecing them together to form a narrative that will underpin the research project, or at least provide the skeleton to one. It is not intended to be providing a complete story of Chapter's theatrical past. As theatre historian, Tracy Davis acknowledges, '[s]ometimes gaps left unfilled tell us more as "empty" spaces than "full" re/contextualised ones' (2004: 204). From this approach a story begins to emerge – as Gale and Featherstone have observed: 'Archival researchers, like detectives, need an obsessional drive to puzzle over minutiae: to make tangential connections; to remember obscure and seemingly unimportant facts and bring them to the fore and into focus; to problem solve and to question the hierarchies of history, the story, as it has been handed down to them' (Gale and Featherstone 2011: 23).

My methodological approach attempts to merge existing frameworks, such as archival work, re-enactment and oral histories, all seeking to collate and present information about a particular past. I am not applying recognised archival practices. Rather, I have aimed to find my own approach with which to identify, catalogue and use the gathered materials in order so that they may be transposed into various performance scores. I am not an archivist, but a performance maker who enters an archive room and regards the documents as stimulus for generating new pieces of work. It is as a performance maker that I approach the research. But what becomes clear is that the approach I adopt to generate the linear historical account of Chapter's history is similar to the one that I undertake for my practice experiments, yet the information generated is delivered differently. The written historical account of Chapter is presented as linear, and provides key information on which my practice is then built. Similarly, regarding the oral history interviews I am interested in how the interviews generate material that can be implemented or implanted into practice. Roms and Edwards note how '[s]cholars of performance are increasingly drawn to oral history as an allied discipline with a mutual interest in the live encounter' (2011: 172), and my approach complements this idea; it is not

merely a information gathering exercise, but it is a method with which the voices from Chapter's history can be brought into a performance that illuminates and communicates that history.

2.14 CONCLUSION

My methodology chapter has aimed to discuss various approaches to the examination of an artistic venue (especially a venue of alternative art) as its own archive. The relationship between the venue and its past (both artistic and operational) is best exemplified by my case study on CCA, whose archive has a close relationship to how the venue operates today. This has allowed me to adopt this approach as a model for my own explorations, through which I aim to both look at Chapter's artistic history and its programming policies and other operational concerns.

Of course, an artist or researcher can potentially use any kind of material (archival or otherwise) as a basis for performance making. I am not specifically concerned with the issue of the ontology of performance, which the debate in performance studies on documentation and archiving has focused on. Rather, the issue in my case is not if archival material can be utilized within a performance context, but what its utilization reveals, what can be achieved when archival material is rearticulated and reconstructed through performance practice that foregrounds the archival materials' relationship to the site that generated and houses them.

The methodology that I have conceived through this investigation has three main components to it. I aim to argue that when considered together these components have the potential to become transferable to similar investigations of the history of other venues. The components are:

1) The methodology considers three main elements of the history of an alternative artistic venue - the venue itself as a producing site and host, the performances that took place there and the documents that record those performances and the venue's operations.

2) In order to examine the contemporary relevance of understanding and reaching back to historical approaches to producing alternative theatre, I develop practice-based enquiries that explore and reconstruct these past approaches, using the three elements (venue – performance – document) outlined above.

Finally, 3) The methodology is attentive to the potentiality of a transferable methodology, especially for alternative theatre venues whose practices might not have been comprehensively documented or recognised within the professional or scholarly sphere.

CHAPTER THREE

A CASE STUDY ON CHAPTER ARTS CENTRE: MATERIAL RECONSTRUCTIONS

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This thesis's focus now advances to its first methodological enquiry, which is in the format of a written historical account of the chosen case study, Chapter Arts Centre. As mentioned, Chapter opened its doors in 1971,³⁴ it was the first arts centre to open in Wales. It was enabled by the driving force of journalist Mik Flood, and artists Christine Kinsey and Bryan Jones.

Today, Chapter is a multiform arts venue that has grown into one of the largest arts complexes in Europe. It hosts two cinemas, a theatre and studio space, a gallery, a large number of artists' studios and creative industry offices, meeting places for the community and a very popular restaurant and bar. It produces and presents contemporary visual art and performance works, and it shows independent, mainstream and international films. A new associate artists programme supporting performance artists (including dancers and musicians) has recently been piloted, and Chapters hosts *Experimentica*, an annual festival of experimental performance work.

Today the venue attracts over 800,000 visitors each year (Chapter: 2015). As a comparison, the Arnolfini is visited by 500,000 (Arnolfini: 2015) and the CCA in Glasgow had 296,000 visitors in 2014 (McKee: 2014). Among comparable venues only Birmingham's MAC attracts a greater number of visitors (921,793 visits in 2013-14, see MAC annual review: 2014), but the latter is of course located in the U.K.'s second largest city with a population nearly three times the size of Cardiff. As these figures demonstrate, Chapter has firmly established itself as a popular arts venue in the city – but figures alone do not paint the whole picture. Chapter identifies itself on its website as 'an organisation that celebrates difference, that

³⁴ Although it officially opened its doors to the public in 1972, Chapter opened in 1971 with a temporary cinema and performance space.

embraces the collision of contemporary and community, of art with audience, of the challenging and new with the open and the accessible' (Chapter: 2015).

This thesis, however, is not primarily concerned with Chapter's present state, but with its history as a potential resource for its future direction. The focus is thereby on Chapter's performance history in particular. As I have noted above, whilst Chapter has always housed visual artists, filmmakers, printmakers and artists and makers of many other disciplines, theatre was, I wish to argue, central to its operations in the 1970s and key to the understanding of its history. Alternative theatre and performance presented a particular challenge to the venue – changes to the way theatre was being made at the time required Chapter to develop different programming and presentation strategies, and those strategies in turn enabled different aesthetics to emerge. And because of theatre's ephemerality, unlike visual art and film, its lasting impact is not as easily identifiable. Performance at Chapter, as this research will explore, was being radically changed during Chapter's first decade. Whilst the venue promoted and showed experimental practices from the outset and even had resident companies housed within it, a major shift occurred in the late 1970s, when Chapter reacted against the touring circuit with a unique residency programme for visiting companies that was unique to Britain at the time. This programme also changed the way audiences encountered the work, and I will include a consideration of the impact of performance being seen in such a venue.

In the following I draw on Chapter Arts Centre's own archival holdings, which are supplemented by the collections held at the National Library of Wales and the V&A's Theatre and Performance Archives. Another component that features heavily in this chapter is that of oral history interviews, conducted with those connected to Chapter's history in different

capacities. The same bodies of research material were used to generate the written component and two of the Practice-as-Research performances.³⁵

For insights into the materials used to generate this research, the Reader is invited to consult pages 1 – 19 of the accompanying Photobook

As discussed, my project began as an exploration into Chapter's history, using its archive (a previously underused resource) and placing a particular focus on the venue's strategies for engaging audiences. My aim was to examine how the venue engaged, and could engage, audiences in challenging contemporary art practices across a variety of art forms.³⁶ Yet, as I have previously noted, as I pursued the enquiry the focus shifted onto the question of venues more generally; an area I contend is under-considered in performance history, as can be seen through my review of literature and through the case study approach of the thesis. The recurrent focus of available scholarship and practice is invariably on artists, their work and their audiences, but very rarely is the focus on the venue as a catalyst and container for the work, even though such a consideration might allow for an alternative genealogy of artistic practice to be revealed. I became interested in what remains of performance within a venue, and how the venue in its stability and fixity can be viewed as a vessel of this history, or even be approached as an archive of the performances that occurred there. I argue that in order to understand a particular performance history one must first examine and understand the venue in which it occurred, and potentially (in the case of Chapter) in which it was produced also. In this, I have focussed upon the performance history of Chapter, in particular with regard to one production, The Pip Simmons Theatre Group's environmental perambulatory version of Georg

³⁵ The second practice-as-research enquiry (*Turning the Spotlight on the People*) was made with and for another venue's archive, that of the Camden People's Theatre, London.

³⁶ By contemporary I refer to "of the time"; however, the term also alludes to experimental practices, an area in which Chapter was particularly engaged in the 1970s.

Büchner's *Woyzeck* [1977]. I suggest that this was a pioneering site-focused approach to making and showing theatre and crucial to the development of Chapter. The radical departure for the venue presented by this performance, I posit, played a key role in securing Chapter's reputation and impacted on its future development as a venue. Conducting such an in-depth research into one particular performance may seem a narrow focus, but any shortcomings, I argue, are outweighed by the fact the this approach allows me to measure more explicitly the impact of such a performance being made and seen in Chapter, thus affirming its key role in determining Chapter's position as a venue that actively produced as well as presented theatre.

This chapter firstly offers a brief overview of alternative theatre in Britain in the 1970s, which formed the context to Chapter's specific performance history. It then moves onto Chapter's first decade, with a focus on its residency scheme (launched in 1977), which featured the aforementioned *Woyzeck* production by the Pip Simmons Theatre Group. This section of the thesis forms the foundation for the main thrust of my investigation – how policy and performance event are bound to a specific venue; how we might examine these to determine their intertwined relationship; and how a historical perspective might inform how artistic work is made today. It employs a variety of sources: archives, scholarly works and oral histories.

SECTION A: THEATRE HISTORY OVERVIEW

3.1 A BRIEF LOOK AT THEATRE OF THE 1970s

Before embarking on Chapter's story, it is important to lay out a brief overview of alternative theatre of the 1970s in the U.K. to clarify the context in which Chapter's history took place. Chapter's programming concentrated almost exclusively on alternative or experimental theatre work – whilst an amateur company with more traditional repertoire, the Everyday Theatre, had its based at Chapter, Chapter's own programme did not really feature such work. Alternative theatre companies of the period with connections to Chapter include: People Show, Red

Ladder, Portable Theatre, Monstrous Regiment, The Pip Simmons Theatre Group, IOU and Belt and Braces. They are just a few companies who formed the “alternative” scene at the time, and they all visited Chapter during its first decade.³⁷

It is a common pattern that alternative theatre of the 1960s and 1970s was often intended as one-off and unrepeated events; it was also common that the alternative work of the time was not published like play texts would be, as the professor of Drama, Michael Anderson argues:

[w]orks from the alternative theatre are less frequently published and when they are, the printed page usually conveys far less of the performed reality than is usual with the traditional play texts. Thus, the would-be critic of the alternative theatre not only has difficulty in tracking down his quarry, but, if he once misses it, loses it forever (1981: 449).

This is supported by Pearson who notes how ‘[d]evised performance – certainly that of the 1960s and 1970s – by definition lacks such explicit documents, and hence is frequently under-represented within the purview of theatre historiography; it is plays and playwrights that are regarded as the legitimate carriers and authors of dramatic tradition’ (2011: 96). The repetition of the play text and its structured meaning was actively fought against by the alternative theatre of this period, with much work being made with the intention of not being recorded or saved. It was also an expensive and laborious process to document performance. The 1970s was an era of experimentation with style, content and themes, and these aforementioned groups were just a few companies who were attempting to create a new style of working that questioned the role of theatre and were consequently part of a significant movement who consciously (or not) did not save and record their work. Reflecting on the process of devising, Pearson states that it is down to two processes:

³⁷ I am talking specifically about Britain here, though I am aware that at this time there was an American influence, as explored by Peter Ansorge, who in the mid-1970s reflected on the label ‘Made in the USA’, which he states was ‘frequently attached to our own [British] groups whose origins tend for the most part to date from the setting up of the Arts Lab in Drury Lane during the early part of 1968. The fact that the now defunct Arts Lab was the brain child of an American, Jim Haynes, has not passed unnoticed by critics of the English underground’ (1975: 22).

selection – what gets into the performance – and *orchestration* – how it is organised once selected. What begins as a number of fragments momentarily adheres and then falls to pieces as another set of remnants. The resulting pieces are usually taken as the evidence for its fleeting existence. Profoundly, it always seems on the point of disappearing (2011: 96).

In her study of performance art's trajectory, Roselee Goldberg reflects how from 1968 '[...] artists approached the institution of art with [...] disdain. They questioned the accepted premises of art and attempted to re-define its meaning and function' (2001: 152). Although Goldberg is talking more specifically about performance art, this change and redefining was also happening in experimental theatre. This is echoed by History scholar, Angela Bartie, who states that the late sixties saw '[a] new generation of artists and theatre practitioners who sought to use new forms to express, challenge and conflict' (2013: 191). Furthermore, she notes how in 1967 '[...] there was a theatrical outburst of street theatre, community and theatre in education movements, touring and communal troupes, and 'arts labs', influenced by American and European experimental theatre' (2013:192). Another important characteristic of this time is the relationship the audience had with the work; as Goldberg states '[...] performance was seen as reducing the element of alienation between performer and viewer [...]' (2001: 152). These reflections become crucial when it comes to how to approach the remnants of an alternative venue – audience feedback, video, and photographic evidence do not necessarily exist (in abundance), yet what does remain and how they speak of performance is significant, and therefore the way in which the documents are approached and interpreted is important to consider.

A further point is that of institutional support at the time; Malcolm Page claims that if alternative groups such as Portable, The People Show, Welfare State and 7:84 'had been better publicised and had been supported for international travel, they could have been truly influential' (1977: 100). Though I think Page prematurely dismisses the impact some of these companies had, he does make a useful point regarding the lack of marketing available for

alternative groups, which would have partly been down to funding. In regards to subsidy, however, there certainly was development for alternative theatre in the 1970s, as theatre writer Andrew Davies notes: ‘In 1971 the Arts Council’s Fringe and Experimental Drama Committee was established and by 1976 a total of nearly £½ million was being given to 18 alternative theatre groups’ (1987: 168). This of course also led to a ‘[...] degree of bureaucratisation - offices, administrative staff, other overheads – and to a perspective which now stressed financial considerations at the expense of political ones’ (1987: 168). But what the chroniclers of alternative work of this period, such as Page (1977), Anderson (1981), and Craig (1980) all missed at this point was what a collaborative approach to working could offer a theatre group working under the rubric of alternative at the time, both aesthetically and organisationally. This is a key discussion for this thesis – how Chapter Art Centre worked in collaboration with theatre groups to realise large-scale and forward-thinking projects, and what relationship the artistic director(s) had with the venue and performance work. Collaboration was a key component – it meant for Chapter that they acted as producers of the work, rather than simply a host. A further point worth noting is that it created a cohesive relationship between venue and the alternative theatre company, which perhaps unwraps arguments about how each could work with one another to enable, support and improve the work that was produced during this time.

3.2 PAST AND PRESENT

The Reader is invited to consult pages 4 – 5 of the accompanying Photobook

Housed within the building of Chapter in the Welsh capital of Cardiff sits boxes of archived material, with documents tracing back to its conception. In a few boxes amongst the hundreds

that are stacked are documents dating back to the 1970s, hand-written minute books, original plans, programmes and artistic material. These documents form the foundations of my major case study - to investigate the origins of Chapter and its first decade of artistic practice. The notion of heritage, and who chooses what remains or what is preserved is a consideration here also. In archival practices an individual often curates documents/objects, and they select what should be saved, as Diana Taylor alerts us to:

And while archival sources may seem uncomplicated, scholars need to consider that the archival object may very well be the product, rather than source, of historical inquiry. In other words, the documents, remains, and artefacts that enter into the archive have undergone a process of identification, selection, classification, and so on that render them archival “sources.” This does not negate that they may be out-there-in-the-world, but it does remind us that they are, in fact, also the product of a system of selection (2006: 69).

This was a concern when I entered the archive room, though the archives that remain in Chapter appear to be there more by happenstance than selection.

The history of art venues in Britain has been largely neglected.³⁸ The best-known book that considers venues is perhaps *Dreams and Deconstructions: Alternative Theatre of Britain*, written in 1980 by journalist and practitioner, Sandy Craig. Although an early recognition, it was perhaps published too early to fully examine the legacy or heritage of places such as Drury Lane, London, Birmingham Arts Lab, or The Traverse in Edinburgh for example (three examples for venues that opened at a critical point for alternative theatre in Britain in the 1960s). The first two in this list no longer exist, and there is little written about the venue in this instance, especially Birmingham Arts Lab which I will now consider because it began at a similar time as Chapter and had a similar ethos. Birmingham Arts Lab was established in 1968 as a counter to Midlands Arts Centre by five of MAC’s workers; they wanted a place that could be a hub of experimental work, as Ian Francis, founder of the Flatpack Festival in Birmingham,

³⁸ *Unfinished Histories*, a research project led by Susan Croft, traces the history of Alternative Theatre in Britain and also considers some of the venues that were instrumental in this history, such as The Oval House in London; however the research on the venues is still in its infancy; see, <http://www.unfinishedhistories.com>

investigated in 2014 when the festival reflected on the Arts Lab through a poster artwork exhibition. In discussing the founders of Birmingham Arts lab, journalist Thirza Wakefield remarks how ‘[t]hey decided to create their own exhibition space that would permit them to display and explore experimental cinema, music, theatre and dance’ (Wakenfield: 2013).³⁹ Its policies were to ‘provide a centre for experimenting in the Arts; be a community of creative people, self-aware and self-supporting; participate creatively in the life of the City; and present work of both its members and visiting groups and individuals’ (Published aims of the Arts Lab: 1998).⁴⁰ Another venue that had a similar ethos to both Chapter and Birmingham Arts Lab was the Arnolfini, established in 1961. Its website states that its purpose ‘[...] was to create a place where all the contemporary arts could coexist and interact in order to stimulate creativity, to provoke thought and to give pleasure to a wide range of people’ (Arnolfini: 2015). Their ethos is quite similar, yet one fell into obscurity and the other flourished. What insight this reveals is the pattern in the ethos of art centres at this time – places that were community focused and experimental in practice.

Though this is not inherently a study into arts centres, it is interesting to consider the factors that enabled both the Arnolfini and Chapter to become such leading arts centres. Another early publication on the theme of art centres, published through the Arts Council of Great Britain, is *Three Art Centres: A study of South Hill Park, The Gardner Centre and Chapter* by Robert Hutchinson (1977).⁴¹ This is the only book that examines Chapter extensively,⁴² and it provides some interesting facts and figures about its first six years. This early recognition cannot provide a retrospective analysis of Chapter’s impact because it was written during its first decade. It highlights its audience figures and budgetary concerns, but it

³⁹ Wakenfield: 2013: <http://www.bfi.org.uk/news-opinion/sight-sound-magazine/features/beau-brum-remembering-birmingham-s-arts-lab>

⁴⁰ See: http://broom03.revolvy.com/main/index.php?s=Birmingham%20Arts%20Lab&item_type=topic [Date Accessed: 3rd March 2014].

⁴¹ Hutchinson worked for the Arts Council as a senior research and information officer.

⁴² Mike Pearson’s book, *Marking Time* (2013), also considers Chapter in two of its chapters.

cannot give us an indication of the impact of its work on the British Arts scene or the local community, as this is something that is learned in hindsight.

With regards to the theatre produced, rather than the venue, theatre scholar, Maria DiCenzo acknowledges a lack of dramatic criticism in the case of alternative theatre, stating that '[o]ften, if any records exist, they are in the memories of the performers and audience themselves' (1996: 5), I also argue that the venue itself is often overlooked and could be perceived and acknowledged as its own "archive", after all its architecture often plays a significant factor in aiding the recall of the memories that DiCenzo talks of. The 1970s saw a burgeoning of new experimental theatre and it was often the case that the venue and the alternative theatre were intertwined - one enabling the other. Theatre scholar, Sara Freeman argues that:

[...] the 'otherness' of alternative companies such as Joint Stock, a new writing company influenced by socialist politics; or Gay Sweatshop, Britain's first theatre company for openly gay and lesbian artists; or the Women's Theatre Group, Britain's longest-lived feminist theatre company, begins in their connections to liberation movements and political activism born out of the 1960s counter-culture and left-wing political philosophy. But this otherness also stems from the use of venue
(2006: 366).

Here Freeman acknowledges that the majority of these groups (who were London based) toured to the more "regional" venues, and very rarely performed in London ones. What this allowed was Performance/Theatre groups to present their work further afield, which enabled venues outside of London to show experimental work. Secondly, the venue became instrumental as the physical site, and allowed these companies a platform in which to present their work.

SECTION B: CASE STUDY ON CHAPTER 1968 – 1973

3.3 HOW CHAPTER BEGAN

The first meeting between Mik Flood, Christine Kinsey and Bryan Jones to discuss the idea of opening an arts centre in Cardiff took place in 1968. Flood had moved to the Welsh capital to

pursue a writing career and rented a room from Kinsey and Jones; as he recalled in an interview: *'I began surveying what was happening in Cardiff in terms of the artistic community and then I took a flat with a couple of teachers [...]'* (Flood: 2013). Both Kinsey and Jones were practicing artists as well as educators.

In an interview I conducted with Kinsey in March 2013, she suggests that many artists in the late 1960s were concerned about the commodification of visual art, wishing to produce work that was not for sale – as a direct reaction against the commercial art-world, which to them was ubiquitous and stifling of creativity.⁴³ Kinsey and the other founders desired a venue that could provide artists with the space to produce work that they wanted to create free from commercial pressures (Kinsey: 2013).⁴⁴ Experimental work was therefore seen as key to the identity of the arts centre. In an interview with Gilly Adams, Drama Officer for the Welsh Arts Council in the 1970s and an advocate for Chapter's work, Kinsey remembers that for visual arts in Cardiff there was only one small commercial gallery at that time: 'The Howard Roberts Gallery showed contemporary painting and drawing but there was no exhibition space for the diverse range of art that was developing through the 1960s. There was also an absence of affordable studio and performance space, so we planned a venue that could fulfil all these needs' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). Jones, Flood and Kinsey imagined a space where artists could both produce and show work, and they began generating support for Wales's first multi-platform arts centre. From the outset therefore, Chapter was not only about presenting artwork, but more importantly it was about providing space for artists to produce work.

⁴³ This can also be traced to the foundations of performance art. As Philip Auslander notes, '[o]ne of the major concerns of performance in the late '60s and early '70s (the era of body art and conceptual performance) was to serve as an alternative to the work as art as commodity [...]' (1989: 119). This is further expressed by Roselee Goldberg who traces the importance of performance art and states that 'it showed how artists chose performance to break free of [...] the constraints of working within the museum and gallery systems [...]' (2001: 9).

⁴⁴ This is confirmed by Kinsey in a previous interview in 1999 with Gilly Adams, in which she refers to the initial start-up of Chapter: 'In this late modernist period, artists were reacting to the booming art market of the 1960s, which often expected artists to change in the same way as designers in the fashion industry. Many artists deliberately began to create unsaleable work [...]' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999).

Chapter opened at a crucial moment for artistic venues in the UK, with the impact of the opening and subsequently closing of Jim Haynes's Arts Lab in Drury Lane in London, inspiring and then casting doubt on a nationwide circuit of similar spaces.⁴⁵ The Arts Lab opened in 1968 and closed in 1969 and in its short life was highly influential in supporting alternative theatre groups of the period: The Pip Simmons Theatre Group, Portable Theatre, Freehold and People Show to name a few. Jim Haynes, as Peter Ansorge reflects '[...] ran his Arts Lab in a nonchalant manner. [...] Yet it is impossible today to enter any of the new theatres, studios and workshops across the country without becoming aware of the immense debt owed to Haynes' Arts Lab' (1975: 25). This was most probably due to the way in which it operated. As Malcolm Hay reflects: 'With theatre the Arts Lab operated an open door policy: companies and groups were welcomed in without much regard for any "objective" judgement about the standard of their work. [...] The Drury Lane Arts Lab was to serve as a model, and indeed an inspiration, for the many small arts labs which opened throughout the country in the next few years' (1980: 156). Drury Lane is remembered as an enabler of work, which is perhaps why it is one of the most referenced venues of this period. However, it is still difficult to get a clear picture of what actually happened within its walls, and it is often the visiting companies and their work that are discussed in detail, rather than the venue itself. The closest to creating an impression of it is perhaps Ansorge, who writes of Drury Lane that:

[a] casual visitor to the Covent Garden venue might have been forgiven for seeing something less than a spawning ground for new theatrical talent. An average evening at the Arts Lab might have involved sitting through a highly subjective one-act play, listening to a combination of Cage and rock on the stereo system, watching the all-night films—but mostly moving in amongst the brigade of permanent hippies who were sipping endless coffees and talking about the future of London's first underground hostelry (1975: 25).

⁴⁵ Jim Haynes was a founding member of the Traverse Theatre in Edinburgh (1963) and was its Artistic Director between 1964 – 1966. He then moved to London, where he was a founding member of the *International Times* and where he set up the Arts Lab in 1967.

Prior to finding the venue that would become Chapter, Flood, Kinsey and Jones visited Drury Lane in the hope of gaining insights for their project. The team carried out further visits to St Katherine's Dock in London, Birmingham Arts Lab and the Arnolfini in Bristol to appreciate how other artistic venues were operating. Despite Drury Lane's impact it was not a model that the team were interested in adopting. As Kinsey reflects in my interview with her: *'I remember going to Drury Lane and it was really like a doss house. It wasn't really what we wanted'* (Kinsey: 2013). However, what Chapter's founders borrowed from it was its ethos, which can be explained through looking at how alternative venues were ran at the time. John Elsom states that these spaces were '[...] usually unconventional buildings which were attractive for their architecture or 'free' atmosphere' (1976: 150) and Malcolm Haynes describes this ethos as a freedom from institutional constraints.⁴⁶

3.4 ESTABLISHING THE SUPPORT AND FUNDING

The Arts Centre Project Group (A.C.P.G.) (initially consisting of Christine Kinsey, Bryan Jones, Mik Flood and Elizabeth Weston⁴⁷), as they styled themselves, began to consider how to secure support for their venture. After placing an advertisement in the *International Times*⁴⁸ (1968), the A.C.P.G. received a reply from Peter Jones, then Visual Arts Officer for the Welsh Arts Council, who, as Kinsey states, was able to expand upon their initial ideas (Kinsey: 1999), and as Flood adds was *'a source of money or seemed to be offering it'* (Flood: 2013).

To further cement what was needed to establish a venue, they began to explore what an arts centre would require in order to establish itself. After meeting with the city's planning committee they were asked – as Peter Davies, Arts Correspondent of *The Western Mail* writes – to produce a 'feasibility study of the project. So they sent out a questionnaire asking societies

⁴⁶ This ethos remained important for Chapter – as Flood expressed in 1979, 'I have a great fear of becoming institutionalized' (in Barker 1979: 17).

⁴⁷ Elizabeth Weston left before the group established Chapter.

⁴⁸ This was London's first underground paper (see Jinnie Schiele, *Off Centre Stages* 2005).

and individuals what they wanted to see in a city arts centre' (Davies: 1973). This was published in the initial proposal from 1970. The following requirements for an arts centre were established in response:

- 1: area for showing films: raked seating to accommodate 150-200 people.
 - 2: areas for experimental theatre, concerts, folk-song, poetry readings, jazz and experimental music, a flat space accommodating a maximum of 300 people.
 - 3: an exhibition and display area where work being done in the Centre could be shown and sold.
 - 4: a permanent communications area where there would be a bookstall, information desk and a form of box-office.
 - 5: large studio area for people working with inflatables and large structures.
 - 6: workshops for people working in printing, metalwork, videotape etc.
 - 7: storage space.
 - 8: refreshment area.
 - 9: meeting or committee rooms.
- (Arts Centre Project Group: 1970).

As the list reveals, to host a range of contemporary work at the time was a priority, and as the questionnaire responses demonstrated, the arts centre would need to be a multi-purpose venue to house such works. It needed space for performance, for film, for visual arts, and so a space large enough to accommodate all of these simultaneously needed to be found. Once the questionnaire had been distributed to the public and assessed, the A.C.P.G. were able to devise a proposal to the Welsh Arts Council, and this document provides an insight into the original concerns, ideals and expectations.

Peter Jones was very interested in the idea of an arts centre opening in Cardiff, and he encouraged A.C.P.G. to establish *Pavilions in the Park*, (February 1970), an outdoor festival that had originated in London and that Peter Jones was keen to transfer to Cardiff. Jones thought it would be a useful way to encourage people to come and see what was happening artistically in Wales: both Kinsey and Flood mention this in their interviews, (Kinsey 2013; Flood 2013). Flood explains that '*Pavilions in the Park was initially set up by artist 'Bridget Riley [...] to*

exhibit contemporary art' (Flood: 2013). The format was used as a means to test the reception of contemporary works in Cardiff.

The A.C.P.G. organised *Pavilions in the Park* event in Bute Park, one of Cardiff's public parks, this allowed the public to encounter the art works and events accidentally.⁴⁹ Kinsey explains how this was a month-long programme: '[t]he objective was not just to publicise the idea of an arts centre but also to raise money to fund it' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). All events were free, which allowed the people of Cardiff to get a sense of the art that an arts centre may potentially make available. According to Kinsey, *Pavilions* was very successful, with people queuing up to see performances (Kinsey: 2013). Despite this success, however, the A.C.P.G. still needed financial backing to establish a more permanent venue.⁵⁰

The first section of the original proposal, entitled *A general survey* outlines how the difficulties of finding adequate space impacted on the creativity of the artist.⁵¹ As mentioned, the main ambition and driving force for opening an arts centre arose from the lack of affordable studios for artists in Cardiff and therefore the venue needed to be adequate to support local artists who were interested in renting space. The proposal continues with the A.C.P.G. discussing the many empty buildings within Cardiff that could be reused for such purposes. Upon discussing a potential space, the A.C.P.G. state that:

[w]ithin this building we could provide a nucleus for the creative activity in Cardiff. A nucleus that would be involved with, and play an active part in the community as a whole. Through co-operation and managerial policy, facilities, equipment and services would be made available to artists who, for financial reasons, would never previously have obtained them. This centre would bridge the gap between the 'established' as sponsored by art galleries, museums and theatres etc, and those active on the work-shop or 'grass-roots' level. We envisage a centre of creative/social

⁴⁹ Other events were also organised, as Kinsey reflects: 'In addition we organised films in the Globe Cinema, symposiums in the Reardon Smith lecture theatre, and opened up an empty department store in Queen's Street for exhibitions and performance. Importantly, through this venue we were able to contact other artists and members of the public: for an open discussion about what they would want for an arts centre'. See, <http://www.chapter.org/chapter-early-years>. [Date Accessed: 2 July 2015].

⁵⁰ Another event organized to raise funds was a concert in Sophia Gardens with Pink Floyd headlining and Quintessence and Black Sabbath supporting, put together by Steve Allison. Incidentally the music from this period (1970) was chosen to feature in the PaR *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*.

⁵¹ See <http://www.chapter.org/original-proposal-arts-centre-cardiff-c1970> [Date Accessed: 2 July 2015].

interactivity encompassing all aspects of the audio-visual arts. A centre that would not be introspective in attitude or ambition but would go out in the community - into schools, pubs, clubs, and hospitals (A.C.P.G: 1970).

It is clear that the ethos the A.C.P.G. was concerned with the identity of the venue, as it mentions grass roots, which indicates local and possibly Welsh relationships – a particular concern of Kinsey's at Chapter's beginning. In her vision for Chapter she states: 'Chapter's two galleries were intended to be windows on Wales and a doorway into the world of contemporary art. We tried to show a good proportion of the art which was being produced in Wales but we also had a responsibility to reflect the major changes which were taking place in the wider art world' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). The ambition from the outset was to create connections to wider artistic world, and later connections with European arts centres, namely the Micky (see Pearson: 2011) in Amsterdam that would be crucial to Chapter's development, as is explored in Section B of this chapter.

Another significant aspect of Chapter was that from the outset, community involvement was integral to the centre's development, as the proposal affirms: '[t]o build a strong force in the artistic community in Cardiff must be our first aim, by doing this we intend to involve the community at large in a way that no art gallery museum or library is capable' (A.C.P.G: 1970). Christine Kinsey's experience as a teacher informed her interest in making the arts centre a place for the community; for example, she was the driving force behind setting up a nursery, that also allowed parents and their children to witness and participate in art work. And the A.C.P.G. acknowledged the importance of connections with groups and individuals, forging community cohesion. The venue would be the host of in-coming contemporary work, of locally made work, and of community focused groups. Through this the three directors felt that Chapter, as a venue could have the potential to attract a range of occupants and audiences.

3.5 FINDING AND SECURING THE VENUE

After considering different buildings, Flood explains how after approaching the city council they were provided with a list of council-owned empty properties (many of them schools). One of them was the former Canton High School, a building and extended site that had been empty for two years. It would prove ideal for the requirements in the proposal to be brought to fruition; it had ample space for studios and enough footage to create a cinema, gallery and performance space. As Kinsey remembers: ‘We looked at three disused buildings and decided that the 27,000-square foot of space on two floors at the old Canton High School was the most suitable’ (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). It appears that the size of the building was a crucial factor in the decision, rather than its location. ‘Chapter is situated in the middle of Canton, a respectable working-class suburb a mile or two west of the city centre. [...] bus fares are peculiarly high in Cardiff and, for those who do not have cars or bicycles, getting across the city can be both a slow and expensive business’ (Hutchinson 1977: 76). The size of the venue would prove to be ideal for the venue to become a multiform art centre – it was large enough and adaptable enough for the team to transform the spaces accordingly. __Due to the poor state of the building, it was offered to the A.C.P.G for a peppercorn rent of £1,000 per year by the City Council. In 1970, they also received a grant of £2,500 from the Welsh Arts Council (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). Bryan Jones lists the centre’s additional expenses in 1973:

[...] the rates being another £700 per year. The running costs this year are estimated to be £21,000. The Welsh Arts Council (£10,000) and Cardiff City Council (£4,000) are providing the bulk of this and Chapter is committed to finding the remaining third from subscriptions, rents and other revenues. (Jones: 20 November 1973).⁵²

⁵² A letter written to Sir Edward Ford, asking for financial aid from the Pilgrim Trust to the amount of £3092.00. A reply was not received from Sir Ford until 27 March 1974, when he apologized for the delay and asked Bryan Jones if he wished him to proceed with the application. The outcome of this application was not recorded in the folder.

Kinsey explains: ‘Peter Strevens, Geraldine Anderson, Richard Watson and Alan Saunders were invited to form Chapter's first management committee and they worked tirelessly to support the reality of a centre for the arts’ (Adams and Kinsey: 1999).⁵³

Once the A.C.P.G team were in the building they began to convert it. This was happening whilst also trying to make Chapter function as an arts centre and to generate income. In converting the various classrooms and other spaces, the work undertaken included manually sanding floors, demolishing walls, fixtures and fittings and eventually building a bar, a cinema, gallery and theatre space.⁵⁴

The first minute book Chapter houses in its archive outlines the conditions and strategies with which the team was working. The first meeting between the founders and board members took place on the 15 April 1971, the same year that Chapter opened its doors. This meeting dealt with the formalities of setting up a business, appointing roles and legal matters (Kinsey: 1971). Points that were raised and decided upon included the company carrying on under the name of Chapter, which as Kinsey states was Bryan Jones’s idea (Adams and Kinsey: 1999); and they had the intention that there would be a Chapter Two (Flood: 2013). On the 17th May 1971 the official registration of the business was established. Its mission statement declared its aim to be:

[t]o promote, maintain and advance education particularly by the improvement of the public taste in the Arts including the Arts of drama, mime, dancing, singing and music, painting, sculpture and film by the provision of an arts centre in the city of Cardiff (Charity Commission: 1971).

⁵³ Saunders was the solicitor for Chapter at the time. There is no further information about the identity of the other members, but it indicates that the A.C.P.G were able to establish a team of people to bring Chapter from a concept to reality.

⁵⁴ They also had help from architect Ian Roberts, who worked with the founders in reimagining the school building for its new identity as an arts venue.

3.6 CHAPTER'S FIRST YEARS – VENUE AND PERFORMANCE

From examining the documents in the archive and from the interviews with Flood and Kinsey, it is clear that the venue's initial period of set up was a demanding time for the founders and volunteers. There was debris left in the building from it having been used by squatters, and the numerous rooms and spaces needed restoration in order to fully function. But giving up their respective jobs, Kinsey, Jones and Flood persevered and were able to unofficially open Chapter in July 1971 with a temporary cinema, gallery and bar, and with former classrooms used as studios, workshops and offices.⁵⁵ Its first tenants were community groups, Everyman Theatre Club (an amateur Cardiff group), the South Wales Arts Society, the Cardiff Ciné Society, the Drama Association of Wales and Heresy Folk Club. Peter Davies writing in the *The Western Mail* later confirmed: 'Chapter arts centre opened officially in March 1972. Within a month, it had 1,000 members.'⁵⁶ Today it rents studio space to a dozen artists and over twenty local groups and societies' (Davies: 1973). This highlights the initial and immediate impact that the venue had; attracting so many members clearly indicated that there was an artistic gap in Cardiff that the centre was beginning to fill; and is also a clear indicator of the team's efforts in establishing the centre in its first period of its existence.

A major advance for Chapter was when the dance company, Moving Being, led by Geoff Moore, moved from London to set up base in Wales in 1972.⁵⁷ It signalled that Chapter had become or had the potential to be a venue that was able to offer the space and time that other venues at the time could not. Kinsey notes that: 'Geoff Moore and Moving Being moved into Chapter in the spring of 1972 and immediately this creative input of professional actors,

⁵⁵ As explained previously, Chapter officially opened in 1972.

⁵⁶ Members of Chapter paid £1 per annum to receive discounts and notification of events.

⁵⁷ Moving Being was an experimental dance company led by Geoff Moore. In his catalogue, 'Moving Being: Two Decades of Theatre of Ideas,' Moore describes his style as "mixed media" (Moore: 13). The catalogue includes a review published in the *Village Voice*, in 1970, which described the work as '[...] committed [...] to refertilise the archaic notions of dance. Moore works with assemblages; its materials include movement, space, colour, film, text, and some less-definable elements [...]'. (in Moore n.d.: 15).

dancers, artists and designers became the driving force in establishing a proper theatre' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). Regarding their move from London, Geoff Moore, the artistic director of Moving Being, recalls that:

Our then administrator found Chapter, the Welsh Arts Council told her about it, [...] and at that point it was very much in its formative stages and they had just an enormous amount of space, a lot of goodwill and were looking for people to come and share the space and to get it cleaned up (Hutchinson 1977: 79).

A few years after they had made a base at Chapter, Peter Davies described Moving Being as being able to claim 'to be Britain's most inventive multimedia drama group' (16 January: 1975). From the programmes housed in the archive at Chapter it appears that in 1973 Moving Being created *Angels*, a mixed-media production. Moving Being were working at the cutting edge of technology, pushing the boundaries of what contemporary theatre could then offer and this production was a positive step for Chapter as it shows that they were beginning to become part of the ecology of experimental theatre work that was happening in the UK at the time, particularly in London. In reflecting on the work of Moving Being, Moore claims that '[...]' adapted or converted buildings often allow more theatricality than purpose built theatres' stating that they had the potential to house '[...]' more intense and varied theatrical possibilities than the whole circuit of newly built campus style theatres [...]' (Moore n.d.: 32). This indicates not only Chapter's adaptability and the openness of its ethos but also the origins of what would now be termed a site-specific approach to working.

Moving Being frequently staged their productions that often involved and explored multi-media technology in Chapter before touring extensively. This pattern of experimental work continued throughout Chapter's first decade, with work from visiting companies Belt and Braces, 7:84 Theatre Company, The People Show and from resident companies such as Cardiff Laboratory for Theatrical Research, many of whom experimented with multimedia, audience interaction and content – often addressing political or social issues. Having attracted Moving Being after only a year of opening, demonstrates that the team were keen to experiment with

ways in which to use the building. This is evident in the space that some of the early work was located. Mike Pearson remembers: '[a]t first, performances were presented in what is now part of the restaurant and bar: Keith Wood's *The Nighthawk* (1974); Cardiff Laboratory for Theatrical Research's *Mariner* (1974); and Moving Being's *The Idea, the Image and the Space In Between* (1974)' (2013: 167). Kinsey remembers in her interview with Gilly Adams that Peter Mumford, the designer for Moving Being, designed a temporary performance space on the ground floor of Chapter before the funds could be raised to build a permanent theatre space (which is currently located on the first floor of the building). Further, Kinsey states that: '[s]ome of the most exciting and innovative theatre in Britain was being created at this time by Moving Being and a symbiotic relationship developed between the Company and Chapter which was mutually beneficial' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999).

Kinsey also mentions the other companies that took up residence in the centre, including the aforementioned local groups, Cardiff Laboratory for Theatrical Research (later Cardiff Lab⁵⁸), Keith Wood Productions (later Highway Shoes), and Paupers Carnival. As well as in-house shows, having this experimental theatre at the venue provided the platform for other groups, as Kinsey explains: 'the enhancement of the theatre space made it possible for Chapter to receive most of the important small-scale theatre companies who were touring Britain at that time, so that Chapter was a real focus for both theatre artists and audiences' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). Again, this demonstrates how the team were beginning to view the centre regarding experimental theatre work of the time; providing resident status to certain groups allowed Chapter to be instrumental in enabling the generation of new performance.

As discussed, it was not just alternative theatre and visual art that was being produced in Chapter; the community-driven focus was also brought to fruition. As Kinsey confirms,

⁵⁸ Cardiff Laboratory Theatre was formed in 1974 by Mike Pearson and Sian Thomas. Pearson was later joined by Richard Gough as co-director. 'Cardiff Lab was one of the most influential companies in the early days of Welsh theatre. Based on Jerzy Grotowski's Poor Theatre and influenced by Eugenio Barba's Odin Teatret [...]. Cardiff Lab attracted exciting performers to Cardiff [...]' (Chambers 2006: 132).

‘[w]hen we moved into the old Canton High School at the end of 1971 our concerns were two-fold: to encourage artists from all disciplines to move into the building to produce art and to ensure that the local community was encouraged to use the building as much as possible’ (Adams and Kinsey: 1999). As Kinsey indicates, the venue was to become a host for a myriad of initiatives, developing both artistic and community driven projects, as well as playing host to social and political groups including, amongst others, the Workers Education Association and providing space for organisations from the Campaign for Homosexual Equality (CHE) to the Labour Party to meet. The centre was quickly establishing itself as an interdisciplinary place – where professional artists, amateur groups, and community groups could meet and be housed under one roof. This is also indicative of the left political alignment of Kinsey, Jones and Flood. They were able to use the building as a host for left-leaning pursuits, which informed Chapter’s reputation.

By 1973 Chapter was beginning to find its identity as Peter Davis, then Arts Correspondent of The *Western Mail*, explained in an article from 1973:

Seen in the morning drizzle, the whitewash letters announcing “Chapter Arts Centre” from the Edwardian brick of a disused school in Cardiff backstreet look like fanciful graffiti. As a community, Cardiff’s working class Canton area seems too preoccupied with its own problems of survival in the face of a city rebuilding programme to have time for art. But return in the evening and you would find a place a hive of activity (Davies: 1973).

Yet this was not without its problems. Centre and community connect here and upon discussing the move into unconventional spaces in the mid-1970s, drama critic and playwright Arthur Sainer argues that: ‘[i]f space is an event, then art is a larger social action effecting that event and the dynamics of the community’ (1975: 60). Space in this instance is an event – as Chapter played host to such an array of work, both artistic and otherwise. Those running Chapter at the time were politically aware, as Kinsey confirms ‘[...] we did get ourselves into lots of trouble, we had to fight very hard to keep our political ideals going [...] there were at times when

Chapter was under threat from various local councillors [...]' (Kinsey: 2013). This is evidenced through various newspaper articles, such as an article published by *The Daily Telegraph* entitled 'Homosexual club "Aided" by Council' (July 30 1973). This article, discussing the subsidy that Chapter was receiving from the Welsh Arts Council, openly attacked Chapter for "allowing" homosexuals to meet there, and as Kinsey remembers: 'In 1972 Chapter's work in such areas was controversial and sometimes attracted hostile press coverage [...]' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999).

Despite this, Chapter continued to develop as a viable arts centre. Kinsey, Jones and Flood established a foundation that not only housed and promoted experimental art; it continued to grow financially too.

SECTION C: 1977: A CHANGE IN POLICY

3.7 CHANGING CHAPTER: VENUE AND PERFORMANCE

By 1976, Chapter was beginning to change quite dramatically, in regards to subsidy it was receiving; over a few years, it had grown significantly, demonstrating how firmly established the venue had become.⁵⁹ Another change was the departure of both Christine Kinsey and Bryan Jones, who left to pursue their own artistic projects. Kinsey had the opportunity to develop her practice as a visual artist in the Caribbean, and Jones went with her. Both Kinsey and Flood

⁵⁹ Below is a table that shows the income Chapter was receiving in contrasting years:

1975/76

Welsh Arts Council	£37,440	66%
South East Wales Arts Assoc.	£11,500	20%
Cardiff City	£4,500	8%
South Glamorgan County	£3,500	6%
Total:	£56,940	100%

1976/77

Welsh Arts Council	£61,618	76%
South East Wales Arts Assoc.	£11,000	13%
Cardiff City	£4,500	8%
South Glamorgan County	£3,500	4%
Others	£935	1%
Total:	£81, 553	100%

state that setting up and running Chapter actually prevented Kinsey from pursuing her own work. Kinsey also felt that she had done all she could at this point and that Chapter needed to restructure. She explains:

By about 1976 [...] both Bryan and I realised that Chapter needed a different kind of business structure. [...] We started with a turnover of £1250 and [...] a thousand of that went for peppercorn rent and we grew it to ¾ of a million [...] in that time. We needed someone to come in and put Chapter on a firm financial footer. I remember deciding that, and Bryan and I needed to get back to our own work, painting and so on (Kinsey: 2013).

Before their departure, Kinsey recalls – in our interview – how the team (Jones, Flood and herself) wanted someone with the vision, experience and knowledge of how new theatre is produced, to continue the ethos they had established. Here she mentions a play that was originally staged at the Royal Court Theatre in London in 1975 called *Sizwe Bansi is Dead* by Athol Fugard, John Kani and Winston Ntshona.⁶⁰ The work explored the controversial pass book issue in South Africa,⁶¹ and Kinsey explains:

It really was most extraordinary piece of theatre and the person who had administrated that was someone called Paul Chandler. I knew Paul had been involved with Birmingham Arts Lab and my instinct told me that he was the only one that could come in and do this job. [...] He is key person in the success that Chapter is today (Kinsey: 2013).

Paul Chandler, an arts administrator, had worked for Birmingham Arts Lab and for The Place in London, and he had substantial experience of theatre administration, an area of expertise that Chapter lacked prior to his arrival. Paul Chandler was appointed as the Administrator for Chapter from 1976. ‘Paul Chandler had come to work in Chapter and it was his creative knowledge and empathy together with his financial expertise which rooted Chapter in the kind

⁶⁰ The information was obtained from the Victoria and Albert Museum website: <http://www.vam.ac.uk/vastatic/theatre/archives/thm-273f.html>. However, since accessing this information the content has been removed.

⁶¹ South African Pass books were introduced during apartheid as internal passports that severely limited the movements of black African citizens.

of financial systems which allowed it to become an on-going success' (Adams and Kinsey: 1999).

3.8 LOOKING TO THE VENUE: RESIDENCIES AT CHAPTER

After the departure of Kinsey and Jones, Mik Flood was left as the sole Artistic Director of the arts centre with Paul Chandler as Administrator.

Despite Chapter receiving more funding overall, Flood was aware of a subsidy crisis for touring work at this time; he was also becoming disillusioned with companies coming in and leaving without forming a deeper relationship with the venue. And so, in order to get a sense of how other venues operated, Flood visited comparable venues in Europe in 1976. It was a visit to the Mickery in Amsterdam, run by innovative director, Ritsaert ten Cate, that Flood saw how ten Cate had adopted a collaborative approach to working with theatre companies, and this inspired him to emulate the procedure at Chapter. A relationship between the two venues was fused during this visit, linking Chapter to an experimental venue in Europe that was both highly regarded and successful. In his obituary in *The Guardian*, Dragan Klaić notes how Ritsaert ten Cate:

[...] was the founding director of the Mickery Theatre in Amsterdam, a legendary centre for experimental theatre as well as a gallery and venue for performance art in the 1970s that played a pivotal role in setting many Dutch, American and UK artists on an international career. Artists such as the Pip Simmons Theatre Group, Mike Figgis and Station House Opera from Britain, and the Wooster Group, Robert Wilson and Peter Sellars from the US, showed their work under Ten Cate's care, and continued on through European festivals and venues (*The Guardian*: 31 October 2008).

In 2011, Mike Pearson published *Mickery Theatre: An Imperfect Archaeology*, a volume that traces the venue's history and approaches to working particularly during the 1970s. Amongst other explorations, Pearson acknowledges the impact that residencies had at the Mickery and describes how important ten Cate was to developments in the field. Pearson relates how in the early 1970s, the Mickery began to host touring productions, and notes how ten Cate was

‘selective in his programming choices, reflecting the political uncertainties and cultural upheavals of the period in favouring the exuberant, the provocative and the inciting’ (2011: 18). Here, he talks specifically about Pip Simmons’ *Do it* (1971) and *The George Jackson Black and White Minstrel Show* (1972) and explains how ‘[t]hese performances expose Dutch audiences to significant radical practices that demand of them equally new ways of looking, experiencing and responding. Appearances at Mickery help the companies themselves to establish and enhance their reputations, both internationally and in their home countries’ (2011: 18). This extended to the work the company was able to produce in Chapter.

The Pip Simmons Theatre Group became integral to my research and I was fortunate enough to meet and interview two members of the group in 2013. These were the musical director, Chris Jordan and performer, Shelia Burnett. During our interview Chris Jordan stated that what was also different in the late 1960s and 1970s was that what was deemed radical or alternative “Fringe” work in Britain was simply called theatre in Europe.⁶² They discussed this in terms of the venues they toured. Stating that *‘In Europe we would present work on the large stages, whereas in Britain it would invariably be in a small black box studio’* (Jordan: 2013). Flood saw how The Mickery’s relationship with visiting companies was different from what he had previously witnessed or established at Chapter. He saw that companies were invited through residency schemes to make and present work over a period of time and he wanted the same companies to visit Chapter, such as Pip Simmons; to bring the most innovative theatre works to Chapter (Flood: 2013). It was after this in 1977 that saw a noticeable shift in theatre programming in Chapter. Flood wanted companies to spend time making work within the conditions of the venue and so the residency scheme began. What Flood (and therefore Chapter, as a venue) did for companies like Pip Simmons was give them the space and freedom to

⁶² Oral history interview with Mik Flood and Chris Jordan of The Pip Simmons Theatre Group on 19 November 2013.

generate work of a scope and scale that they had previously been unable to do in Britain. The vision and visit was realised (in 1977), and Flood and Chandler secured funding from the Welsh Arts Council to invite Pip Simmons to stage a promenade version of Georg Büchner's *Woyzeck*.⁶³ Pip Simmons also secured £32,000⁶⁴ from the Welsh Arts Council towards producing the work, with the aim of touring it thereafter. A report from the Welsh Arts Council acknowledged and seemingly supported Pip Simmons's new venture in residency working, rather than small scale touring.

Consequently, the residences began in 1977, the year that Flood produced new plans for Chapter; in a report for the coming year, he writes: '[w]hen Chapter started in 1971 there was a conscious decision that theatre should not dominate us or the building as it did at so many other arts centres we had seen – places where all other activities became subordinate to a hegemonic theatre presence' (Flood: 1977). However, Flood goes on to explain how this was an overreaction and instead acknowledges what in turn, Chapter had not done. For example he outlines the following: 'it hasn't committed itself enough to the work, it hasn't established a positive identity for itself' (Flood: 1977). He also writes about the relationship between artists and venue, which he felt at the time had not been properly established, and in order to rectify the situation, Flood suggests that the 'commitment must be made beyond the show' (Flood: 1977). In hosting the companies, what Flood achieved was a symbiotic relationship between venue and company, reaching far beyond the performance as a one-off event. Flood outlines what he echoes in other publications surrounding the subject of *Woyzeck* and subsequent residency work – that he wants to 'see a move away from product towards an emphasis on process' (Flood: 1977). Flood further proposed that he wanted Chapter to be able to pay fees for work to be both produced and performed. Flood here firstly introduces the notion of

⁶³ In the oral history interview both Mik Flood and Pip Simmons's members, Chris Jordan and Sheila Burnett, spoke of the freedom Flood handed to the group, allowing them a complete run of the building.

⁶⁴ Taken from an Arts Council report by John Faulkner and Anthony Field, 21 December 1977.

residences; again stipulating that he was keen to work with companies whose ‘working process is as important an artistic criteria as the product’ (Flood: 1977). This marrying of process and product is, I think key to Chapter’s success and demonstrates a clear picture of how, through the change in policies, the venue became instrumental in being the instigator of the work.

This is the first crucial aspect to the methodological aspect of this research. The residencies were active in both producing and showcasing original and large-scale theatre. Companies such as IOU,⁶⁵ Waste of Time and later Welfare State were all part of this scheme after The Pip Simmons Theatre Group (see Pearson 2013). Certainly for IOU and Pip Simmons there is surviving documentation that suggests what an impact this had on Chapter at the time. Mike Pearson, in *Marking Time* (2013) draws attention to both companies: ‘In 1978, IOU had devised *Between the Floods – the Churning of Milky Ocean* over a three-week period in Chapter [...]. This was a series of projects, beginning in the late 1970s, in which companies were in residence for several weeks: The People Show, Dutch group Waste of Time and Pip Simmons’ (2013: 172).

I suggest that it is through a live reconstruction of Chapter’s archival material and collected oral histories that Chapter’s significant history could be made available and thus acknowledged for the first time since its inception. What this does is rather than only privileging the artists and practices of this period, it highlights the significance of what was implemented through innovative policies, the role a particular set of architectural and social conditions played, and the continuing importance of collaborative approaches to theatre making.

By examining the material housed in the National Library of Wales, I was able to substantiate some of the claims this research is making. In a document entitled ‘Chapter

⁶⁵ See <http://www.ioutheatre.org/projects/residency-at-chapter-arts-centre-cardiff-305>.

Theatre & Theatre Pool', dated 13 February 1978,⁶⁶ the term 'Theatre Pool' refers to the idea of 'shared resources at Chapter' (13 February 1978: 1). It refers to a collection of companies working together to share resources in order to improve administrative and technical needs, another indication of an increasingly collaborative approach to theatre making. The document discusses the necessity for radical improvements needed for 'lighting equipment and some basic sound equipment [...] a second performance area is also of high priority' (13 February 1978: 2). This would have been responding to the ever-growing demand for space and number of theatre pieces being made and presented.

The Theatre Pool was an idea to expand the administration and technical areas within Chapter to enable the effective production and staging of performance work. This is directly linked to the residency scheme, and an outline proposal discussing this explains how it would be the 'biggest change in policy since performances were first presented at Chapter, in the old downstairs theatre' (13 February 1978). The document continues by acknowledging how 'the decay of the small-scale touring system has already been well accounted for and the new plans are partly a response to that state of affairs and very much a recognition of the need to balance, constructively, the work of local artists and those from other parts of the world' (13 February 1978). Chapter was very aware of how touring work was in decline at this time, and Flood and Chandler were devising ways in which this could be counteracted. The residencies were implemented as a way of working, rather than a stand-alone experiment. Flood felt strongly that a fused relationship between artist and venue was crucial in order for the touring theatre at that time to be transformed. Flood felt it had stagnated and that artists were compromising their artistic qualities to make work quickly and cheaply. This is outlined in an interview from 1977 where Flood claims that:

Theatre groups today are in a treadmill mentality. They have to turn out a new show all

⁶⁶ The documents had the initials PC/MDF/CLB written at the top; this would have referred to Paul Chandler (Chapter's administrator from 1975) and Mik Flood, the then-artistic director.

the time, tour it for X number of weeks, then start again. And there's a terrible immobility, inflexibility in the venues that accept fringe work, which I've always felt we must avoid (Brassell: 1977).

The 'Chapter Theatre & Theatre Pool' document discusses the impact of *Woyzeck*. Describing it as a prototype, the document explains how it 'demonstrated the potential public interest in theatre at Chapter' (13 February 1978: 1). Furthermore, the document explains how 'the residency approach will enable local and visitor genuinely to influence each other's work and, through a more lively working process, engage the audience in a fresh and vital theatrical experience' (13 February 1978: 2). This demonstrates that the change in Chapter's policy was at the forefront of new and innovative practices, and that the performances resulting from the residency scheme enabled audiences to see cutting-edge and experimental theatre practices not available elsewhere in Wales.

Outlining the idea of extending the residencies to resident companies, the document lists the five groups who at the time were housed in Chapter. These were Cardiff Laboratory Theatre, Diamond Age, Red Light, Saga, Paupers Carnival and Moving Being. Moving Being had established a firm base from 1972, always performing their work at Chapter before touring. There was at the time a clear distinction between the resident companies and those visiting companies who undertook short-term residences. The Pip Simmons Theatre Group visiting Chapter through the residency scheme, moved in for a four-week period that temporarily situated them within the community of the venue, with a varying degree of impact on other occupants. Thus, the focus of Chapter's theatre programme shifted in the latter part of the 1970s. As the overleaf quote implies, Flood claimed how he was tired of the touring mentality and instead wanted longer-term residencies to be part of Chapter's future: Pip Simmons and IOU in particular began to work in collaboration with Chapter to produce shows within the venue. By implementing the residences, Chapter became a host venue for what we would now call site-specific and immersive productions on a large-scale that, as argued by Flood, helped

cement its reputation for being a leading arts venue for innovative performance art of the 1970s and beyond (Flood: 2013). This is supported by Pearson who claims that the residencies were '[...] site-specific in all but name: the term was not widely applied to theatre until the late 1980s' (2013: 171).

A further document from the National Library of Wales outlines the plans for Chapter's theatre for 1978 – 79; it includes a 'general policy' section that states:

During the course of the last year, Chapter has embarked on a new course in programming policy, a move away from the prepared "imported work" to a much more active commitment to indigenously produced work, with a substantial part of our theatre budget allocated to the professional groups forming Chapter's "Theatre Pool", established in December 1976. The groups are: Cardiff Laboratory Theatre, Paupers Carnival, Red Light Theatre, Transitions Trust, Diamond Age
(Flood: Plans for 1978/79).

These groups challenged both approaches to making and staging the work that they created at Chapter. It is generally accepted that work of alternative venues and companies in the 1970s was as much about process as about the end product, as reflected in the symposium I attended at Oval House, London (18 November 2013⁶⁷), hosted by Susan Croft organiser of the 'Unfinished Histories' project.⁶⁸ Here, artists of the 1970s spoke about how the right to fail and the importance of process over product was significant. Flood supports this, reflecting that prior to Margaret Thatcher's government (pre-1979) there was a mentality within the arts that allowed 'the right to fail' (Flood: 2013), something that he claims the Thatcher era curtailed. Without the right to fail, this arguably began the institutionalization of arts centres that suddenly found themselves with obligations to fill rather than being free to experiment. The residencies at Chapter mark an important development in the relationship between programmer, venue and artist. In my interview with Flood, he proposes that the residencies transformed the work itself into a collaborative output – between company and venue (Flood:

⁶⁷ See Susan Croft (2016): <http://www.unfinishedhistories.com/ovalhouse-season/>, 'Unfinished Histories Salon: Oval House in the 1960s and 1970s' [Date Accessed 22 September 2016]

⁶⁸ See Susan Croft (2016): <http://www.unfinishedhistories.com>. [Date Accessed 22 September 2016]

2013). This retrospective evaluation is consistent with Flood's thoughts at the time: in an article published in 1977, he states that:

We want to see if we can do it, and do this as a future way of working all the time, and not just being a venue taking this or that company's work. The process is just as important as the product (Brassell: 1977).

The Pip Simmons Theatre Group's production of *Woyzeck* made full use of the gallery and performance spaces as well as the public areas of Chapter. I discuss the production and the relationship to surviving documentation in greater depth in Chapter Four where they form a case study in my Practice-as-Research. But what is key is that Flood was keen to ensure that venues were active partners in the process of the work made, rather than ticket sellers, as discussed. He states: 'I think it should mean a much more active response to self-generated work, putting on rather than bringing in' (Flood: Plans for 1977/78).

3.9 THE PIP SIMMONS THEATRE GROUP IN RESIDENCE AND ITS IMPACT

The reader is invited to consult pages 14 - 15, and 33 of the accompanying Photobook to view photographs of Pip Simmons's *Woyzeck*

As mentioned, before Pip Simmons Theatre Group created and showed *Woyzeck* at Chapter, they had made numerous appearances at Mickery in Amsterdam. In 1977, whilst in residency there, they created *The Masque of the Red Death*, based on the works of Edgar Allen Poe. Pearson describes how '[e]very visitor is given a white cape, a cap and a mask at the Mickery cloakroom. After the prologue in the foyer you can see scenes that are derived from Poe's work in the different spaces of the theatre: *The Masque of the Red Death*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Raven* (2011: 236). As *Woyzeck* would come to do later that same year, *The Masque of the Red Death*'s performance style would make the audience '[...] become increasingly involved

in the events' (2011: 236). With Pip Simmons pondering '[h]ow can I still provoke that specific Fringe audience?' (2011: 237). *Woyzeck* was staged in an attempt to utilize the full resources of Chapter. This included building a lake in the shape of a skull in the rear yard, and transforming the cinema into a fairground and the loading dock of the theatre into a pawnshop. It was a promenade piece with local performers and volunteers enlisted to take the audience on their journey, whilst offering a peep show, selling green candyfloss at the fairground section and postcards of nude women to its punters.⁶⁹

This new departure for theatre making would have been a unique experience for audiences because: '*Woyzeck* questioned the role of the audience because we shoved them around through nine spaces and the line between voyeurism and being audience became a very thin one' (Flood in Barker 1979: 19). Its ambitions were largely the same as those at Mickery, which Pearson quotes as: 'We want to do things here that have not happened or could not happen anywhere else. We want to combine all art forms here. Our theatre/exhibition room must become a laboratory where artists can work together [...]' (ten Cate in Diegritz 1989: 24 in Pearson 2011: 17). What the production of *Woyzeck* achieved through the residency scheme was that it challenged the way theatre was made, presented and experienced at Chapter. In his review of *Woyzeck*, Chris Stuart discusses why there was such a shift, claiming that the show is:

[...] a significant indicator of the way in which fringe groups, and their receiving theatres, are modifying their ways of working. Rising costs and the seemingly spreading decline of audiences to turn out to catch groups as they pass through on at most, three-night stands with shows that are portable and short, are among the factors prompting reappraisal (1978: 28)

Being housed in Chapter not only allowed The Pip Simmons's Theatre Group to become familiar with the venue and the surrounding area, but it also allowed resident artists and local

⁶⁹ This information was established from archival sources held at Chapter.

audiences to become familiar with the company's theatre-making process.

The resulting work was both deconstructed and visceral, where the audience followed the protagonist through the constructed spaces and watched his demise – much like as a contemporary audience might experience an 'immersive theatre' production today.⁷⁰ In reviewing *Woyzeck*, *The Daily Telegraph* observed that '[...] we feel the need [...] of a new definition of theatre' (Shorter: 1977). Here the reviewer recognised that the show attempted to depart from the conventions of traditional work, thus demonstrating its impact on theatre making and viewing. Analysing this radical move in an article entitled 'The Critic and the Alternative Theatre', published in 1981, theatre scholar Michael Anderson claims that:

[o]f the thirty-seven companies listed in the Arts Council pamphlet, about a third have their headquarters outside London. [...] Companies based in London for administrative convenience present their work on tour in art centres, university studios, pubs, factories and other outlandish venues unlikely to attract the metropolitan critic (1981: 448).

These latter two sources clearly demonstrate the difficulties in creating a critical discourse around emergent forms of theatre such as that represented by *Woyzeck*, Shorter himself singularly fails in his review.

The scheme therefore that Flood conceived for Chapter was a radical departure for how theatre was made and seen at the time in the UK, and it illustrates a real change in policy direction for Chapter. It is clear from interviews, both past and recent, that Flood wanted an approach to artistic production that allowed Chapter to be instrumentally involved in the theatre generated but as more than simply the host of the work. In the spatial, technical and administrative facilities it could provide, it was unique in the U.K.

Flood was also concerned with the involvement of its own artistic community and beyond; Pip Simmons put out an open call for unpaid extras, opening the production for local

⁷⁰ Examples of present-day companies who use this approach include DreamThinkSpeak and Punchdrunk.

people to become involved (Simmons: 1977). This presents an attempt to establish a locally rooted approach to working, indicating how both Chapter and the visiting company wanted to form a relationship with its local audience. In an interview given at the time of making *Woyzeck*, Pip Simmons claimed that '[t]here is a process that we're all beginning to believe in, that it takes more than a theatre group to make a show' (Audience interview: 1977). Here, Simmons recognised the shift in theatre making that Flood had come to espouse, acknowledging the benefits of extending the practice beyond the core theatre team, an approach familiar to ten Cate's work at Mickery. This approach to collaborative working bridged the gap between company and venue, forged a relationship with the community and established the venue as active producer rather than ticket seller. This first residency allowed the audience to experience Chapter as a space for art, shifting their relationship with it – the production was no longer limited to the spaces designed for the purpose. Ultimately, this first residency marked a radical change - for venue, performance company and audience:

This *Woyzeck* lays down its own terms of reference, houses them in scenes of breathtaking verisimilitude and invites its packed, gaping audience to partake of the ensuing melee and to profit from the enveloping vitality (Stuart 1978: 29).

3.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has traced the history of Chapter Arts Centre from its opening in 1971 to a particular important year for the venue, 1977. It has examined the approaches to producing and presenting that Chapter developed, the relationship that the directors had with the venue, the relationship the venue had to performance works that were produced and staged within it, and finally the impact that seeing such performances in the venue had on its audience. The focus has been on Chapter's unique residency programme which it began in the late 1970s; the residencies ceased in the early 1980s, after Flood departed to work in the United States.

The approach to how Chapter operated during its first decade has not, as discussed, been critically explored previously, and it poses many questions about the potential of

accessing this past and evaluating what significance the alternative venue has, how performances changed the venue and what returning impact the remains of such events can now have. Moving on to my Practice-as-Research experiments, I hope to provide insights into both its past and its present by a process that examines the relationship of the venue's history. As discussed, Chapter was both pioneering and operating in progressive practices of the 1970s for alternative theatre (amongst other art practices). What I am concerned with is the relationship that Chapter had with performances created there, and furthermore, what can be understood about Chapter (and subsequently other alternative venues), through a Practice-as-Research methodology that looks to give a researched history live reconstruction. Within this practice, I demonstrate how its past is summoned from documentary material and from the memories of practitioners and audience members, thus what is created becomes experiential in the present and opens up a contemporary evaluation of past approaches to producing theatre.

This chapter has provided an initial exploration into the case study of Chapter's history, with a particular focus on the theatre residency scheme it offered. But what is missing is how the physical documents and oral histories might speak to one another; and how a tripartite methodology might enhance our understanding of Chapter and its relationship to its past performances. The next chapter considers if putting the tripartite approach into action (investigating the relationship between venue – performance – document) can offer a more nuanced understanding of a venue's history, legacy and perhaps future.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEMPORARY VALUE OF PAST METHODS OF PRODUCING THEATRE: PERFORMANCE RECONSTRUCTIONS

4.0 THE ARC OF THE PRACTICE-AS-RESEARCH

Practice 1: September 2013 – November 2013: In situ in Chapter to make *Playing (at) Woyzeck*, presented at Chapter Arts Centre on 9 November 2013

Practice 2: May 2014 – September 2014: Creation process for *Turning the Spotlight on the People*, presented at Camden People's Theatre on 18 and 19 September

Practice 3: January 2015 – June 2015: Creation process for *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, presented at the Foundry, Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, Aberystwyth University, on 11 and 12 June 2015

My initial enquiry began with an exploration of the surviving documentation of the Pip Simmons Theatre Group's production *Woyzeck*, created at Chapter in 1977. My twin aims were a) to locate and identify relevant materials in the Chapter archive and elsewhere b) to undertake a work of practical re-enactment in relation to such documentation. In this way, through direct engagement with fragments of scenario, images and period accounts, my ambitions were fourfold: a) to better understand the working methods of the Pip Simmons Theatre Group b) to better appreciate the nature of the residency schemes offered by Chapter in the mid 1970s c) working on site, to comprehend the impact of Chapter – as a social and architectural context – on the nature and form of performance at that time; and d) through contemporary performance itself, to provide a glimpse of past practices in the place they were initially enacted.

The second enquiry created and performed at Camden People's Theatre shifted the emphasis away from a specific performance and re-enactment to focus upon the venue's history

and relationship to producing theatre as evidenced through its archive, particularly its administrative and financial documents, demonstrating both the managerial complexities involved in an artistic venue and the high survival rate of this portion of its archive. Again, there was an historical focus – concentrating on 1994 – but the project enabled me to develop the practical methodology by attempting to ‘voice’ non-dramatic records and to develop imagery that evoked the materiality of the archive itself, and its physical encounter.

These two enquiries embodied – through contemporary performance – two of the three aspects of the tripartite model: (past) performance and document; venue and document. Involving only specific aspects of the overall aim of the thesis, they nevertheless suggested formats and concepts and helped shape approaches for the summative work of practice, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*. In this third enquiry, my aim was to design and present a model that could take up the documentary remains of performance events and of a venue’s history, including written and oral sources, to evoke both place and period. This was achieved ‘off site’, at another location, in the hope of creating new, critical dialogues concerning legacy and heritage through the disruptions of distance: bringing together site, performance and documentation in a second, constructed space where the nature of Chapter, its history and productions can only be appreciated through the mechanisms of contemporary performance. And in this, I contend, is the potential for a transferable methodology.

4.1 OVERVIEW OF PRACTICE

This final chapter examines the three Practice-as-Research (PaR) components of the enquiry. Some of the research material formulated in Chapter Three was extracted and reformulated to inform and be further examined in three live events. I will critically analyse the events in the following to explore how a practice-based approach using acts of live reconstruction might allow us to experience and understand a past relationship between a venue and its

performances, and, furthermore, how we might consider the contemporary relevance of engaging with this relationship. I explore whether a reconstructive practice-based methodology provides the research with a more nuanced, complex understanding and elaboration of the materials than the written component alone might allow. I suggest that in using the tripartite approach within the third piece of PaR enables that understanding to be enacted on a deeper and richer level. As previously discussed, I was inspired to develop what André Lepecki refers to as an '[...] active (rather than reactive) and generative (rather than imitative) approach to "historical material" [...]' (2010: 29 – 30), and this is reflected in the process I undertook. Below illustrates the approach I devised for each enquiry, with each experiment using a different method to create it:

1) *Playing (at) Woyzeck*

Venue: Chapter Arts Centre

Stimuli: The concept of the performance event: *Woyzeck* by the Pip Simmons Group (1977)

Materials used: Documents that survived in Chapter's archive from the performance.

2) *Turning the Spotlight on the People*

Venue: Camden People's Theatre

Stimuli: Camden People's Theatre as a venue

Materials used: Documents pertaining to the venue's history, its administration and any materials not relating specifically to the artistic work that happened there.

3) *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*

Venue: Foundry Studio, Aberystwyth University

Stimuli: Chapter as a venue and the concepts of performances

Materials used: Documents pertaining to Chapter as a venue and documents relating to past performances, particularly the *Woyzeck* production (1977). Oral histories from various people involved in Chapter and *Woyzeck*.

The first practical investigation *Playing (at) Woyzeck* was made using archival material located within Chapter's storeroom. It was created using documents related to and derived from actual

performance texts: that of The Pip Simmons Theatre Group's *Woyzeck*. Although it was performed in the place from which they originate, the venue remained only implicit to the research enquiry; its history was not directly referenced or embodied, as it is in later experiments.

The second practical investigation was a commissioned piece of theatre for Camden People's Theatre (CPT) in London. It was made using their own archive and was reflective of both the venue and the period it was depicting – 1994. Entitled *Turning the Spotlight on the People*, which derived from a newspaper article about CPT,⁷¹ it is an exploration of archival material drawing upon supplementary and 'non-artistic' documents pertaining to the administration and finance of work; not only was it performed in the place from which they originated but the venue was explicitly evoked through the performance text. Performing this piece at a different venue helped to extend the research beyond its focus on a single venue and position it more clearly as a transferable methodological enquiry.

Finally, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, performed at Aberystwyth University: a performance that was made using both sets of surviving documentation and recorded oral testimonies. Furthermore, the venue, its history and relationship to past performance are evoked within the work. This is an act of transferred representation rather than a staging at the venue itself as Chapter was unable to host the work. Yet, I argue that by constantly alluding to place within *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, I was able to reconstruct and communicate Chapter's relationship to its performance history. *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* is a final embodiment of my tripartite approach.

The approach to practice has been developed using strategies and theories discussed throughout this thesis, including the adaptation of Brith Gof's tripartite approach and looking at how other artists and scholars have engaged in archival and re-enactment experiments.

⁷¹ See <https://www.cpttheatre.co.uk/about/the-history-of-cpt/> [Date Accessed: 18 September 2014].

Within the practice experiments I make use of two types of texts: artistic/creative texts and administrative texts. The kinds of texts that exist ‘outside’ of the performance event contribute to the possibility of comprehending the narrative of a venue’s history. I arrived at this strategy from firstly experimenting with what materials I had at my disposal within Chapter, which were predominately artistic. From sourcing further materials, such as financial and administrative documents, I became interested in how these kinds of documents work alongside one another; and what they communicate separately of an event and venue.

The reader is invited to consult pages 10 - 19 of the accompanying Photobook to once again explore some of the documents and approaches to generating the PaR.

Within the practice, I was inspired by the notion of what André Lepecki describes as ‘[t]he body as archive and the archive as a body’ (2010: 31). I was driven to consider how my body could represent the archive and how the archive could become flesh, or have flesh sewn back onto it. The archive has the capacity to be transformed by those who enter it; as artist Martin Nachbar reflects: ‘I go into the archive and a difference emerges, the archive gets messed up. At the same time it becomes visible through my body [...] my body makes the archive visible, and at the same time creates a difference’ (2010: 38).

I am also interested in Maaïke Bleeker’s use of the term ‘cover’. I do not adopt the term directly because the notion I have chosen to use – reconstruction – allows me to reconstruct a particular relationship, that of the three historical elements of a venue’s history: its site-event-archive. However, I do echo Bleeker’s coinage of its meaning: ‘[a] cover is a remake of or a response to an earlier artistic creation from the position of another artist at a later moment in time’ and ‘[c]overs differ from reinventions in the sense that the new work is not a reinvention of the older one from a rethinking of its source material, but a response to the work as it has

come to us through repertoire and recording’ (2010: 18 – 19). This is further developed as Bleeker argues that ‘[t]he notion of cover, thus, much more than re-enactment, points to the ways in which recordings and documentation mediate in our understanding of past performances, and the artistic ideas expressed within them’ (2010: 19). These concepts have played a significant role in the making and processes of this research’s practice, and my reflection on practice responds to and evaluates the ways in which they played a key role in the reading, deciphering and presentation of Chapter’s history.

The first practice investigation, *Playing (at) Woyzeck* juxtaposed and assembled documents to examine what they might reveal to me as both researcher and performance maker. It was always intended that this would lead to further practical experiments to consider how they work together within a series of PaR investigations, and furthermore what they reveal within the overall trajectory of the research. They were also carried out to assess what I, as a performance maker, could offer the research that the historical analysis cannot – in regards to piecing together Chapter’s relationship to its past performance and making it vibrantly available and alive for the audience witnessing it.

In the first PaR project, narrowing my investigation down to one aspect of Chapter’s performance history enabled the research to focus upon and to examine carefully the chosen production of *Woyzeck* and its relationship to Chapter as a venue. As discussed in the Introduction, the research and findings for this project are situated within a specific location – Chapter itself – and the work investigates the possibilities of what it means to play with the idea of trying to piece something together within a place that has subsequently shifted – artistically, structurally and administratively. The first stage of the research drew on existing documentation to create my own version of the first scene of Pip Simmons’s *Woyzeck*.

In the third experiment *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, being required to present my project within a space in which it had no immediate connection encouraged me to further

consider how using both the document(ation) of a previous work could be brought together in my reconstruction. To substantiate my exploration, I implemented a further addition of oral histories and in their study of locating performance art in Wales, Heike Roms and Rebecca Edwards experimented with an oral history methodology:

The embodied and dialogic dimension of the oral history interview is considered especially productive with regard to artistic practices that have eschewed traditional dramatic narrative in favour of other forms of telling, most notably through physical expression, and that have frequently replaced the single author with collaborative creations (or, in the case of solo artists, a greater awareness of the dependency of their performance work on the audience's collaborative act of witnessing). Such practices, the argument goes, have in the past been overlooked, marginalized, or insufficiently documented by a scholarship focused on the written word and the singularity of the author-creator (2011: 173 – 174).

Experimental theatre of the late 1960s and 1970s produced few documents that survived in ways similar to those of the traditional play script. This shortfall has in the last ten years stimulated an academic interest in locating and attempting to understand alternative ways of working, particularly through oral histories that are, as Heike Roms points out, performative in their nature. *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* seeks to develop an approach of reconstructing performance in order to reflect on the past for the present. It is concerned with sourcing and interrogating information and creatively building on material; investigating to what extent the layering of memories informs and illuminates work from the past; and contemplating the potential insights that are revealed about a venue. As Mike Pearson and Michael Shanks suggest:

The active process of interpretation is to clarify or explain the meaning and significance of something, deciphering and translating the past in the present. In prophesy to interpret is to read significance and infer courses of action. Interpretation is also about the performance of a work – acting out something to give it an intelligible life (2001: 11).

In the case of the archives, my role as researcher was to work through them – to attempt to discern what the performance work was saying and doing at the time and what it might say

today, by deciphering them within a present day context. Pearson and Shanks propose that: '[t]he aim, whether it is recognised or not, is to construct something new out of old, to connect what may appear dissimilar in order to achieve new insights and understandings' (2001: 52). Although I am referring back to a past performance, by reconstructing material I am in effect making something new; and that new work provokes fresh ideas about what the original work, or what the policies surrounding it were doing at the time. Making it alive for an audience, I suggest, renders it experiential, and thus shifts the document from something locked away, to something experienced and felt, as Diana Taylor argues performative acts do (2006).

A careful consideration of what is needed in the making of performance in order to shed light on past performances, venues and strategies for the present day is crucial in this development, something I return to later in the discussion of performing the developed works.

PART 1: THE EARLY PRACTICE EXPERIMENTS

4.2 THE PERFORMANCE AND ITS DOCUMENTS: *PLAYING (AT) WOYZECK*⁷²

The Reader is invited to consult the accompanying Photobook of *Playing (at) Woyzeck* on pages 20 – 35. The Reader will be invited to examine particular photographs and audio clips at certain moments in the chapter.

Title: *Playing (at) Woyzeck*
Venue: Chapter Arts Centre
Date: Saturday 9 November 2013
Duration: 10 minutes
Audience Capacity: 50 – 80
Format: End-on, studio-based piece
Performers: One

⁷² For the score that was used to conceive *Playing (at) Woyzeck* see Appendices at the end of the thesis. There is no script for *Playing (at) Woyzeck*; the score offers an indication of how the document material was used to create the PaR performance.

Playing (at) Woyzeck was performed at Experimentica, Chapter's annual festival of experimental performance on 9 November 2013. As mentioned in the previous chapter, it was the concluding segment of Mike Pearson and Heike Roms's *Marking Time: A Journey into Cardiff's Performance Past*, a guided tour to places where performance had been created in the 1960s and 1970s. In Nicholas Whybrow's edited collection, *Performing Cities*, Pearson and Roms describe their performance as '[...] a coach trip to former sites of performance in the city. Drawing on tattered documents, fading photographs and vague memories the trip aims to recover and evoke performance work of the 1960s and 1970s, and to celebrate its role in Cardiff's cultural life' (2014: 120 – 121).⁷³

My segment was the result of a year's research on Chapter, with the final three months in residency at the venue itself, where I was housed in the archive and able to devise a PaR enquiry using documentary artefacts. I specifically employed a folder of remains from Pip Simmons's *Woyzeck* production in an attempt to reconstruct the materials into a short performance. As I was following the format of *Marking Time* that included short segments of presentation, I was allotted ten minutes. I decided to focus my research on one scene in particular – Scene One, set in a Barber Shop. My performance was an addition to Pearson and Roms's ambition for their tour to be '[...] accompanied by modes of presentation and re-enactment, employing performance itself to evoke performance' (2014: 137).

The Performance

The Reader is invited to locate the Sound Files on the USB and listen to track: 1 that accompanies the picture on page 21 of the Photobook.

⁷³ The coach trip included a stop at six separate sites across the city with fifty passengers on board. (See Pearson and Roms 2014: 120 – 138).

I stood in front of a mirror and behind a desk. The image I created, despite my outfit, which consisted of black shorts and a black vest, conjured up that of an archivist standing in front of her document materials. My wall (the mirror behind me) was framed to appear like that of a detective's – interlocking pages on display for the audience to ponder as they found their seats in the semi-circle around the performance space.

To my left was an overturned chair, a discarded shirt, some trousers, a top hat and a white sheet. It looked incongruous to the formality of the archive table that displayed documents. Quietly, 'We'll Meet Again' played on loop over the sound system, cutting abruptly and repeating itself again and again until the audience was settled.

I pressed play on my computer and my own voice, calmly and slowly began to broadcast over the speakers. My voice gave the audience some context of the Woyzeck production and introduced them to what was coming....

The Reader is invited to listen to track: 2, an edited version of the performance's audio. Please note the gaps in the track have been edited out or are significantly shortened, however these represent where live text was spoken. Please also consult pages 22 – 32 of the Photobook to examine the performance photographs.

I ran over to the discarded scene that lay to my left and immediately began tidying it, frantically but carefully putting everything in its place. I picked up the chair, I put on the clothes and the hat and I sat down on the chair. I adopted a fearful and confused face and quickly rose to my feet, this time adopting a more confident stance and began talking to the now absent character in the chair.

It was becoming clear to the audience that I was playing all of the roles within this short scene. I responded to my own voice that was playing out on the speakers, instructing me

to carry out actions that I unearthed during my investigations of the original. It was the voice of the archivist playing over the performance, keeping watch over the materials as they came to life.

As the scene played on, it became more and more frenetic – clothes were stripped and shaving foam applied to the face and the body, I became the victim and the victimiser, embodying all the characteristics I had deduced from the document remains. As the performance ended I was standing on the chair as a humiliated figure with the sound of drums playing...

In *Marking Time*, Pearson and Roms drew an audience of past and current artists associated with Cardiff, and I was therefore fortunate to have some audience members present who had seen the original *Woyzeck* in 1977. This was the only one of my research events that had such an audience, and it was a significant moment when considering memory and its role and value within performance history. In their series of conversations with key artists from Wales, sub-titled *An Oral History of Performance Art in Wales*,⁷⁴ Roms and Edwards reflect how in the interview with one of the artists, Anthony Howell (who had been a lecturer at the Cardiff art school), explained how architecture played a key role in memories being triggered. Howell was being interviewed in the same room in which he had previously taught performance:

In his interview about the history of performance at the School [i.e. Cardiff School of Art and Design], Howell discussed several performances that he had witnessed in the space. He seemed to use the architecture of the room to call up from his memory the details of these works, evidently locating them imaginatively within the outlines of the present space (2011: 198 - 179).

This also played a part in *Playing (at) Woyzeck*, although I did not perform my segment of performance within the same space as the original scene – the room was part of Chapter's

⁷⁴ The interviews are transcribed in Roms 2008.

layout in 1977 prior to redevelopment. But within the context of the reconstruction, the memory of it acted as a trigger for those audience members who had seen the production in 1977. This was inspired by Roms's 2011 experiment, *How to Build an Art Centre? A Guided Audio-Tour* in which by walking through the building, artist Mike Pearson, Chapter founder Christine Kinsey and former technical manager Dave Hutton were able to link memory to existing and changed architecture.

It is important here to look back at my process reflexively: to enable the reader to understand how I reached certain points, and how the methodological approach became a standardized one for the subsequent practical experiments. I therefore return to the very beginning of my archival search.

In September 2012 I was presented with a four-page list of the materials stored in the archive room in Chapter. This is an un-catalogued collection, and the list merely states an overview of what has been saved; consequently it infers what was not saved, and this shortfall can be as creatively productive as what was missing. Concentrating primarily on the early years, the enquiry focussed on how the arts centre was initially set up and run. It became apparent in seeking material from the 1970s that documents from this period are in short supply; I discovered that some folders that displayed a particular visiting company on them, such as IOU, were empty, indicating here that although their significance was acknowledged, no remains were in fact kept or ever existed.⁷⁵ As previously noted, I came across an unmarked box with a collection of programmes from those early years, which is where I first encountered the residency scheme and the first company to take part in it – The Pip Simmons Theatre Group. This prompted me to consider it carefully; after reviewing further folders from that period, it became clear that The Simmons archive was the most complete, providing the impetus to

⁷⁵ This realisation prompted me to look at documents referencing IOU in the V&A's Theatre and Performance Archives.

concentrate upon the company's documents and to evaluate what could be revealed about Chapter as a venue through this specific focus.

From September 2013 I was in residence at Chapter and therefore I had ample time in which to familiarise myself with the *Woyzeck* materials. Once I had read, re-read and become familiar with the documents I categorised them into three distinct groups — “pre-show”, “show” and “post-show”. For example, all of the reviews belonged to the “post-show” category and the script belonged to both the “pre-show” and “show” categories. Arts Council communication belonged to “pre-show” and the programme to the “show”. This provided a clearer picture of what materials existed, and what they might reveal about different stages of the residency and the production.

I arranged a table for this categorisation and this enabled me to assess what artefacts I had at my disposal. The task then was to work through them and to attempt to uncover specific details about the performance and the process of its creation. Amongst other concerns, I was particularly seeking any information that pinpointed what the performance was like for the audience; what it was like in style of presentation; and how it was made, something I hoped in turn might offer inklings of how, why and in what capacity Chapter's policies supported and enabled the event.

Secondly, I produced a large depiction of the production to gain a greater sense of its style and content, on which I outlined headed sections, such as themes, styles of music, and characters. Under these headings, I sought quotes or references from the documentary artefacts that could be abstracted and built into the diagram. From this exercise I was able to begin devising a score for each scene of *Woyzeck*, noting any quotes that pertained to a particular moment in the show, whether it was a character, a room, a prop or action. This score would

eventually form the dramaturgical structure to the new event and it would become a procedure repeated for all experiments.⁷⁶

Focusing on one project at a time and carefully outlining a diagram for re-constructing performance helped develop this initial idea into a methodological approach. Pearson and Shanks' analogy of the crime scene (see pp. 59 - 62: 2001) allowed me to view the documents as the traces and remnants of the original event. Hence a review was not just a value judgement on the event; it contained integral forensic details that could help flesh out the surviving score. Pearson and Shanks remark on the '[p]lurality of event. Many different, sometimes contradictory and divergent, narratives are generated' (2001: 60). This was certainly the case with reviews and documents that were saved as some spoke of seven distinct scenes, whereas others spoke of nine. Close examination of the script remnants show how it had been edited and chopped up to create a reworking of Büchner's original. In scrutinizing such details I was able to piece them together and begin reconstructing them in an impression of the original in order to inform my own practical work. As well as literally playing the character of Woyzeck, the title *Playing (at) Woyzeck* derived from the notion that I was initially playing with what materials I had available, without the opportunity at this point to see if they would develop into anything more concrete.

Using my approach of categorisation, I was creating an objectively composed score as I was relying on documented words about a piece of work, and trying to focus on any descriptions that helped me capture the style and tone with which the group operated. Eric Shorter's review read: '[...] By the way, where is Woyzeck? He comes eventually into every scene to be stripped or reviled or cruelly mocked – a laughing stock, presumably because of his good nature [...]' (13 December 1977). This single quote is highly suggestive and

⁷⁶ This information can be seen in the appendix entitled 'Woyzeck score conceived through archive material'.

informative: he was stripped, which suggests that the production was physically uncompromising and perhaps voyeuristic; something I attempted to capture in my short segment. The fact that the character of Woyzeck was of a gentler predisposition gave me opposing traits to work with when developing the characteristics of the other figures in the work. Having witnessed *Woyzeck* at Chapter, Chris Stuart – writing in *Plays and Players* claims:

One could, I suppose, question the repetitiveness of some of the performance techniques—the obsession with nudity, the revue-style caricature and so on – but the conception and its realisation carry such originality and conviction that they scorn nit-picking pedantry. The scenes look, smell and feel real, the performances are committed and powerful, and the whole evening is constructed upon an imagination of extraordinary breadth (1978: 29)

A review such as this provided a considerable amount of first-hand observation with which to work. For instance, the reference to ‘revue-style caricature’ was key in developing a personal style appropriate for the reconstruction of this piece of work. Unpicking these impressions and creating something new from them was part of this process. I (re)constructed something for a contemporary context, and such detailed interpretation was crucial to the development of the approach. I experimented with character development, and overly exaggerated gestures to reinforce the caricature nature of Simmons’s work.

In concept and now gradually in reality were the beginnings of a kaleidoscopic framework for my enquiry – a process involving close scrutiny, taking a piece of written documentation, analysing it and deciphering it with the ultimate aim of making it into a live event. The photographic record of *Woyzeck*, albeit sparse, was still material evidence that I was able to reference; music on the other hand I had no access to. The only references to music were in Eric Shorter’s review, which noted ‘[i]n the Tavern scene a rowdy rock concert, I am invited to dance’ (13 December 1977), an indication of its interactive nature. This also suggests that the scene was high energy. However, this only points to one moment, and so it is difficult

to ascertain the type of music that was used for the entirety of the show. Peter Ansorge, in *Disrupting the Spectacle*, comments on Pip Simmons's use of music generally: '[...] the role [...] is very important; explosions in musical fashions are frequently and ironically related to wider explosions in society: they tend to witness and embody an imminent sense of collapse' (1975: 32). This suggested to me that the music, composed by Chris Jordan, a core member of the company, was reflective of the period. Moreover, Ansorge observes that: '[...] a typical evening in the company of the Pip Simmons Group combined the energy of a football match or pop concert with a decisive attack on mainstream liberal values. The shows were steeped in cynicism, excitement, despair and good music' (1975: 30). This reminds me of Fiona Wilkie's remarks when defining site-specific practice. Briefly, she talks of a '[...] public well-versed in the popular culture of gigs [...]. (2002: 152).

In the V&A's Theatre and Performance Archives, I came across a report written by music specialist John Cumming in response to *Woyzeck* that noted that '[...] the music ranges from an opening number which would do credit to any John Hanson production to rock and music hall, a good old fashioned spectacle abounds [...]' (14 December 1977). This information provided the impetus to explore the genres of both rock music and music hall songs, as well as confirming the spectacular nature of the work. Using the genres for guidance, I set about identifying the music that would pay homage to the original; however, the idea of the music being reflective of wider societal issues and demonstrating an imminent sense of collapse was at the forefront of my approach to devising.

I decided to work with a musician and singer to capture this, and my collaborator, Alison Matthews, was asked to choose and record two songs that could be likened to the style of music hall; through this she delivered her own version of *Harvest Moon* and *We'll Meet*

Again accompanied on the ukulele.⁷⁷ The songs produced for *Playing (at) Woyzeck* were merely indicators of a particular style and form, rather than a direct replication of the original; I had neither the original music on record nor the score, and chose therefore to give a hint of the atmosphere of the original – Stan’s Cafe’s re-staging of *The Carrier Frequency* as discussed in Chapter One on the other hand did work with the original music. This perhaps highlights further that what I was undertaking was less of a *re-enactment* and more of a devising technique involving the reconstruction of documentation. Another aspect of note here is the fact that in trying to capture the essence of the music I was interpreting a review, which was itself an interpretation at the time and so it becomes a representation *of* a representation. This was a written document, and Philip Auslander suggests that he does not ‘[...] consider writing a form of recording [...]. Written descriptions and drawings or paintings of performances are not direct transcriptions through which we can access the performance itself, as aural and visual recordings are’ (1999: 52). I draw on the distinction here in that Stan’s Cafe were able to access *The Carrier Frequency*, whereas my access to *Woyzeck*-related material was incomplete. However, the review did provide crucial ideas that helped form some sort of understanding, and as Matthew Reason posits: ‘[...] reviews are *about* live performance, with one of its primary functions being to present the performance to readers who were not there’ (2003: 184).

Peter Ansorge’s text was certainly critical in understanding Simmons’s work; in order to incorporate his idea that the music referred to wider societal issues, I layered in the chorus of Miley Cyrus’ *Wrecking Ball* (2013), a contemporary song that was much criticised in the media at the time of my performance. It referenced a current concern with celebrity culture that acted as my own version of ‘a sense of collapse’; music is an element in performance that has the capacity to resonate in specific ways with an audience and it can act as a trigger for the

⁷⁷ *Shine on, Harvest Moon* (a vaudeville song popular in the early 1900s) is credited to Nora Bayes and Jack Norworth; *We’ll Meet Again* by Vera Lynn (1939) is a familiar wartime melody.

audience to form broader associations.⁷⁸ It was my hope that the image of a half-naked performer covered in shaving foam and writhing on the floor, coupled with a contemporary piece of music, might arguably be a contemporary equivalent of Simmons's original intention and image; a present day equivalent of the 'sense of collapse'.

The Reader is invited consult page 34 of the accompanying Photobook to view pictures of the moment I attempted to create a contemporary sense of collapse.

This process and the subsequent output were crucial to the overall enquiry, as it demonstrated how the document remains might be enacted. Through physically embodying details of the documentation, I became familiar with them in a way that I had not simply by notating them. By learning text and creating the choreography a significant shift took place in the research. I was beginning to understand the significance of Chapter's relationship in facilitating and enabling performance, and the equal importance of familiarising myself with materials that were not specifically performance related, but to the venue itself.

Robin Nelson compares Practice-as-Research methodology to a creative dramaturgical endeavour and suggests that it is '[...] a method of inquiry, aiming not to establish findings by way of data to support a demonstrable and finite answer to a research question, but to put in play elements in a *bricolage* which afford insights through deliberate and careful juxtaposition' (2006: 109). This was certainly a methodological approach that my own project involved, and this active engagement was – in this context – much more revealing than a solely literature-based historiographical approach.

⁷⁸ In her video, Cyrus is seen half naked sitting on a wrecking ball in a building site. It caused controversy due to its overly sexual nature, which was also explicitly displayed in her live performances. This acted as a stimulus for my own version of creating a sense of collapse as it displays the media's obsession with celebrity culture that often overlooks more pressing societal issues.

The insights gathered from *Playing (at) Woyzeck* have now shifted somewhat from those of the immediate aftermath. My concerns have become much more about the process I went through rather than the performance output itself – about reaching into an archive, extracting, juxtaposing, fragmenting and piecing together. It was a means to familiarise myself with Chapter from the 1970s – haptically.

The Reader is invited to read page 35 of the accompanying Photobook for a reflection on *Playing (at) Woyzeck*.

Playing (at) Woyzeck: Take Two

The Reader is invited to consult the accompanying Photobook to see photographs of *Playing (at) Woyzeck: Take Two* on pages 36 – 43.

A further development saw a restaging (of sorts) of *Playing (at) Woyzeck*, with an added addition of audience interaction. It was with this experiment that I wanted to see what would happen to the performance if I handed over the actions via instructions to the audience. I planted sealed envelopes in the audience – some of them simply given the role of audience member, whereas others had careful instructions written out to follow at particular stages. It was here that I learned in hindsight that what I was investigating was the idea of displacing the archives, something that would become integral to the investigation. I was seeing what a contemporary audience could make of the documents if given the opportunity to play with them in the live moment.

I played with my audience/performers in a way that revealed the documents even further. They no longer belonged in the folder I had found a year previously; they had become ‘un-boxed’. They were alive and they were being provided to be played with and interpreted

by other people, not just myself. It gave them another relevance and it gave them presence. It demonstrated that the documents did have significance outside of the box – that they were actual and potent.

After this moment, I began to explore what role the audience could play within the ephemeral reconstruction. It would be in the final work, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* that this role would be interrogated. Rather than a direct participation, I would place the audience in the playing space and investigate how their presence shaped the structure of the live work. This role was not explored in *Turning the Spotlight on the People* because here I was rather investigating the transferability of the methodology after it became clear that I was no longer able to present further work at Chapter.

4.3 THE VENUE AND ITS DOCUMENTS: *TURNING THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE PEOPLE*⁷⁹

‘Performative interpretation, [...] an interpretation that transforms the very thing it interprets [...]’ (Derrida 1994: 51).

The Reader is invited consult the accompanying
Photobook through pages 44 - 47

Title: *Turning the Spotlight on the People*
Venue: Camden People’s Theatre, London
Date: Thursday 17 and Friday 18 September 2014
Duration: 20 minutes
Audience Capacity: 30 – 50
Format: End-on, studio-based piece
Performers: One

The aftermath of *Playing (at) Woyzeck* took an unexpected turn, as previously discussed, and my research moved to another venue and here I tested what administrative documents, that were not about one particular performance or instance, communicated about a venue and its

⁷⁹ To view the script the reader is invited to look at the Appendices situated at the end of the thesis under the title ‘Turning the Spotlight on the People’ script.

relationship to past performance work. *Turning the Spotlight on the People* was an interim event for this research; a test to see what insights might emerge from entering a second venue and from using administrative documents alone. The most important stimulus was the singular image of the box – a box that would represent the archive, and perhaps more importantly represent the venue itself.

This investigative section of this chapter reflects on the materials, the process, and the critical findings of *Turning the Spotlight on the People* performed at Camden People's Theatre (CPT), London – a small theatre venue in London that was opened in 1994 by Sheridan Bramwell, Tony Gardiner, Penelope Prodromou, Shaun Glanville and Lynne Kendrick.⁸⁰

In the aftermath of *Playing (at) Woyzeck* I continued experimenting with the methodology I was establishing. I decided to move on to working with administrative documents to investigate how they could be used within a reconstruction to potentially shed light on an artistic venue and its artistic pursuits. Coincidentally, there was a publicised call from CPT inviting artists to respond to the past with consideration for the present. The opportunity was as follows:

As part of Camden People's Theatre's CPT@20 anniversary strand, we present 20:20 Vision – a weekend of new commissioned work (selected via open call for submission) exploring how the world has changed since CPT's foundation in 1994, and how it may change in the two decades to come (Logan, B: 2014).

Realising that CPT housed its own archive, I was keen to continue working with archival remains but instead of focusing on a performance event, this time I would extract from and formulate a new Practice-as-Research experiment using only the documents relating to its administrative and financial past. I proposed delving into the archives at CPT as stimulus and springboard to a work that would access the past twenty years of the theatre's activities, both

⁸⁰ All of which were once part of the Unity Theatre. See: <https://www.cpttheatre.co.uk/about/the-history-of-cpt/> and <https://www.cpttheatre.co.uk/about/>. [Date Accessed: 18 September 2014].

political and social. To coincide with the brief from CPT, I also approached the process by using CPT as a lens into wider issues and attempted to create a narrative that could be both referential and reflective of the period (that of 1994). Here I always had the venue as the catalyst for creation - from the outset I wanted the venue to somehow 'speak' – to demonstrate that that documents, history and site/architecture were inextricably bound

My creative process began with a single image – of cardboard boxes worn on a person. This derived from the idea that by literally embodying the archive, I as the performer would be able to manipulate it and therefore give it potency and also be able to discard it. This notion of 'discarding' appeared early in the process and would later be developed with the emergent narrative and its themes. Rather than a discarding, it became about un-boxing the archive, releasing it into a live moment for an audience to witness a history using the modality of performance. The archive, or the symbol of the archive – the storage box – would be at the centre of the work and the next experiment: *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*.

The insights obtained from this experiment refer primarily to the process, as it opens a debate about the archive and venue. This process relied heavily on situating research approaches in relation to a specific date – 1994 – this being the year that CPT opened and thus providing the context on which to focus. What resulted was that the year became the centre point of the narrative rather than CPT itself. The performance was therefore an allusion to CPT rather than an explicit narrative of the venue itself, although there were specific sections where the venue was the central concern. This allowed for a much wider understanding of what the political and social landscape and associated issues were like for artistic venues at that time. Although CPT was in effect a strand of the research, it did remain a constant within the conceptual and dramaturgical processes. Fragments of its history would filter through within a much wider narrative sweep. *Turning the Spotlight on the People* dealt with the notion that even the seemingly disconnected, are essentially interconnected.

The performance

I lay still behind a row of boxes as the audience trickled in. As they sat down they were able to see a row of featureless boxes piled on top of one another in a line. 'I swear', a song by All-4-One, blasted out of the speakers as I pushed boxes apart and revealed myself. 'I'll be there for you' by the Rembrants, that familiar song from US television show Friends abruptly cut in – music from 1990s. As this latter song played, I made my way to the front of the stage and picked up a microphone. I spoke as the venue. I gave the venue a voice. I became the venue.

Boxes were turned around showing words written on them – 'secrets', 'lies', 'power'... the boxes are not empty, they are containers of history.

The performance slowed, the mood shifted. It was a moment of nostalgia interjected with wider societal and political occurrences. The audience were invited to remember, invited to look back.

The lights darken; the music pumps out, reminiscent of a 'rave'. The boxes are gradually piled on top of one another, being destroyed in the process. I robotically start to place the boxes on myself and I wear them as I walk over towards to the front of the audience and collapse in a heap.

Below is a breakdown of the twenty-minute performance:

Title of scene	Action	Themes
Boxed Archive	Lying behind a row of boxes as audience enter. Come through boxes	Presentation of boxes as archive

The Venue Speaks	Delivered speech from the venue's perspective	Personification of the archive – experimenting with giving the venue a voice
Secrets	Boxes methodically turned around to reveal words written on the opposite side	The stored away archive and alluding to recent 'cover ups' (Rotherham/Rochester)
Let us Recap	Events from 1994 are displayed on large cardboard signs as a speech about a picnic is delivered	Conflating public and private events. It showed what was happening in the world when the founders of CPT were opening the arts venue.
Culture	The 'archives' are destroyed as a rave song blasts out	Reference to the rave culture and recent events echoing past events (Rochester and the Fred and Rosemary West case)
Un-boxed Archive	The boxes are worn and then collapsed into a heap	The public archive – bringing the locked away documents to the public

The project worked from the single image of the box, and all that developed thereafter was created from that one image. The dramaturgical bookends of the piece embodied the 'boxed archive' and the 'un-boxed archive'. This was also reflected in the research trajectory – it began with the box of materials and culminated in performed work. The beginning of *Turning the Spotlight on the People* involved a series of unmarked boxes lined up, whilst the end of the

piece showed boxes with various texts written on them ('lies', 'secrets', 'things to reveal', for example) and myself as the performer – wearing six boxes and discarded amongst the other boxes. This decision was made to demonstrate the research process behind the piece on one level, and artistically and politically, to demonstrate both the power and disempowerment of the document. The boxed document can be left dormant and stored away, whilst the un-boxed document can be manipulated. Diana Taylor notes the transformability of the archive and notes how '[...] what changes over time is the value, relevance, or meaning of the archive, how the items it contains get interpreted, even embodied' (2003: 19).

With this observation in mind, it was important to build around the centrality of the box image. Boxes would become the principal feature to focus on and to interact with throughout the investigation. What became important to the work was that the outside of the boxes became more interesting or important than the assumed contents. Using labels to reveal things, to cover things up, these boxes became symbolic political emblems in the piece.

In 'Let us Recap' I had written a narrative from some photographs I found in CPT's archive that showed four people together on a picnic and walk in the countryside. Inscribed on the front of the envelope was 'Picnic in Hampshire'. What struck me about this find was the personal nature of the photographs and the fact they had been donated to or left in the archive. It opened questions about how such personal moments become tied up with our working life – and vice versa. I later discovered that the people in the photograph were in fact the founders of CPT.⁸¹ For my creative process and the overall research, this made the personal photographs even more poignant – I questioned why were they in the hands of CPT and not with one of them. In my narrative, I chose one of the people in them to provide the perspective. This resulted in a rich and reflective text to work with and I focused on the central idea of memory. In looking at the script, which can be found in the appendices, the reader will see the deliberate

⁸¹ I matched their faces to that of the newspaper article noted earlier.

repetition of the words remember or remembering, a notion developed from my research on ghosting and hauntology.

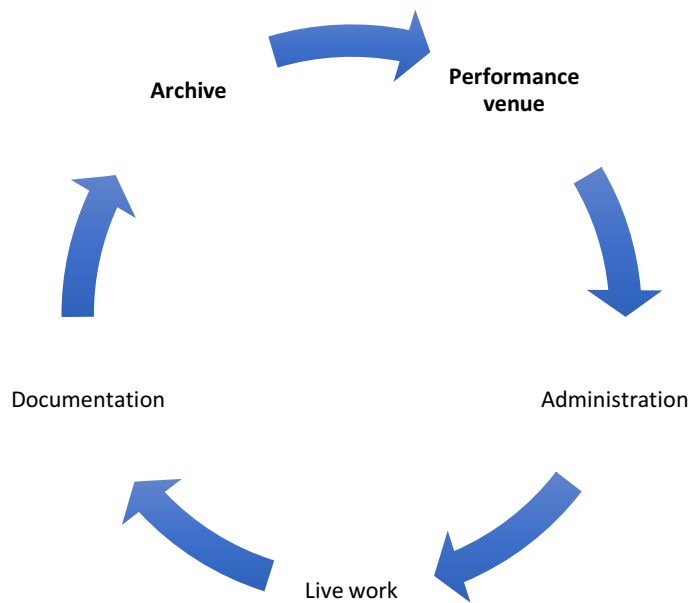
Using this script, I layered it over an earlier devised section that used Blur's *Parklife* (written and released in 1994)⁸² and cardboard signs with moments of 1994's history depicted on them. Whilst I frantically ran around alluding to these moments in history, I gently spoke the words of the photograph text. This juxtaposition allowed for the larger and more political moments to sit alongside the personal, something that is reflective of everyday life.

To consider the venue, I decided to write from its perspective too – in order to give it a voice. This personification would enable the venue to speak in an organic way rather than attempt to speak through the document, something that could be dry and theatrically unappealing. My amplified voice would speak of the demands and expectations placed on an artistic venue. Here there are aspects of the previously explored term, hauntology, initially coined by Jacques Derrida and explored by Diana Taylor. She notes that '[t]he ghost is, by definition, a repetition [...]' (2003: 142). It is by no coincidence then that aspects of repeated history such as re-enactment and the debate of the archive is currently widespread. Taylor declares that her '[...] view of performance rests on the notion of ghosting, that visualisation that continues to act politically even as it exceeds the live' (2003: 143). *Turning the Spotlight on the People* used this notion through its conception and development as it used the venue's archive as an access point into re-activating the politics of the time. Here I find the notion of a cyclical history useful. Philosopher, Charles Pegüy states that '[h]istory is essentially longitudinal, memory essentially vertical. History essentially consists of passing along the event. Being inside the event, memory essentially and above all consists of not leaving it, staying in it and going back through it from within' (1931: 230). Here I suggest that the

⁸² Music was one factor that allowed the document to be placed within a timeframe as all music used was from 1994. This was employed in an attempt to 'transport' the audience into that era, or at least make them feel a sense of nostalgia and passing of time.

performative venue is also set aside from the strict linearity of time in the sense that its history is rooted in memory, which as Pegüy argues is vertical. Though the idea of a vertical line is removed from the A——B of time as it is commonly understood, I propose that perhaps it is neither vertical nor horizontal and instead suggest that it is cyclical – in the sense that its history is always returning through the process of memory, socio-political occurrences, culture, trends, and that of ghosting.

Time is the issue that arises here; as Beth Hoffman argues, time is associated with the word ‘live’ (2012). She proposes that ‘[...] time is the locus of the ‘nowness’ of live art’s now; time’s movement effects the disappearance of live art in its ephemerality; it constitutes an indispensable dimension of the condition of being alive’ (2012: 37). If time and liveness are inherently bound, then what of presence? I argue that the very presence of a building remains fixed, (and I mean this in the most physical of senses) and through this fixity it allows a cyclical history of time, rather than a longitudinal or linear trajectory. The transitory, for example the performer/ance, does not have the same sense of fixity, the performer moves on and develops, and the performance event ends after the final get out. To return to *Turning the Spotlight on the People*, I am examining to what extent the venue as a constant can act as the vessel to trigger past events. The idea of the return or ghosting is important here, rather than performance exceeding the live; I am bringing the non-performance documents of a performance venue to the live moment. The chart below depicts the cyclical notion of the work:



As the chart displays, all aspects are conjoined and influence one another. I argue that one is not complete without the other. The performance venue operates through its administrative apparatus that enables live work; this live work is documented and subsequently archived within the performance venue. Begin at the archive of the performance venue and you find information on the administration, which becomes the live work that is then documented and put back into the archive. Although a continuous process, the key factors (archive and performance venue) are always read at the beginning; without these the cycle ceases to exist.

A venue's identity does not rely on the repeated performance of the past. But seemingly dead documents can return to 'haunt' the place through being activated within a 'live' moment and become something that enables that past to speak in the present.

In the scene I called 'Culture' – a reference to both its content and the name of the song used in the scene – there were references to both 1994 and present-day events. This decision was made to shed light on what hasn't changed, rather than create a disjunction between the times. 'Culture' played with the idea that certain moments in history are shrouded, manipulated and ultimately discarded or forgotten about. Through amalgamating the events of two periods the text became a single whole, playing with the idea of cultural memory. Marvin Carlson

suggests ‘[a]ll theatrical cultures have recognised, in some form or another, this ghostly quality, this sense of something coming back in the theatre, and so the relationship between theatre and cultural memory are deep and complex’ (2003: 2). Though Carlson talks of more traditional theatres and in particular characters and actors returning, what this piece did was look to moments that inadvertently passed through CPT and then, through my work, returned. ‘Culture’ played with the idea of fragmented memory; the text was seemingly out of context and stood alone, rather than within a coherent narrative that was readily understandable.

[...] like the memory of each individual, it is also subject to continual adjustment and modification as the memory is recalled in new circumstances and contexts. The present experience is always ghosted by previous experiences and associations while these ghosts are simultaneously shifted and modified by the processes of recycling and recollection (Carlson 2003: 2).

Here there are multiple factors to consider – first, the memory I am referring to in *Turning the Turning the Spotlight on the People* concerns wider cultural or political circumstances within a specific theatrical context. The memory is triggered within the space that is often referred to as a place of memory – the theatre. Carlson refers to Elin Diamond who explores the use of the “re” in performance. She notes how ‘[w]hile a performance embeds traces of other performances, it also produces an experience whose interpretation only partially depends on previous experience [...]. “Re” acknowledges the pre-existing discursive field, the repetition within the performative present’ (Diamond in Carlson 2003: 2). The use of the “re” aligns with the idea of hauntology – a return. I echo Powell and Shaffer who argue that ‘[...] hauntology functions as a critique of ontology as we have understood it. Hauntology does not surpass ontology; it reimagines it’ (2009: 1). *Turning the Spotlight on the People* did not question the authentic histories of performance works at CPT, but rather used materials existing within the archive as memory triggers, to reconstruct them and essentially give them flesh – they were the ghosts, but ghosts that were locked away, and ghosts can only haunt the space within which they have been confined. In reconstructing them they become alive again. Jane Blocker argues

that '[t]he archive is empowered to create origins, the place from which things commence, the site where history begins' (2013: 203). In this instance, I differ and instead propose that the archive in this case is disempowered, as it remains untouched, unseen, and unused.

From its conception until the present CPT has been artist-run. As with Chapter, the founders were set upon creating a space for artistic creativity, and from reviewing the archives the extent to which they achieved their aims became clear. *Turning the Spotlight on the People* did not work alone as a practical investigation, it needed the other two projects as reference points and comparisons. However, it was a useful exercise to explore how the approach I was developing – to reconstruct materials from the archive in order to understand a venue (and its relationship to its performance) – could be transferable. It was, I suggest, on the whole successful. *Turning the Spotlight on the People* revealed new questions about the role of the archive for this research – I felt it was imperative, after this experience, to have a voice of authority – someone who had been involved in the venue – to somehow speak, which is where oral history interviews become part of the narrative thread in my final Practice-as-Research experiment.

At the beginning I had proposed to CPT that I could find and conceive a narrative through working within their archive that did not necessarily rely on the artistic materials but rather sought inspiration from the administrative, the financial and the un-catalogued documents to illuminate its history, its trajectory and ethos. In this, I was working closely with the research ideas I had begun to formulate through my Chapter archival investigations. Using a black box studio and staged in an end-on arrangement, I investigated the relationship an audience might have with documentation; and what relationship the venue might equally have with its own past.

Within this piece I 'became' the document, I 'became' the venue and ultimately I 'became' its history. I was set apart from the audience; their role was to watch rather than to

participate. There was a distance, but that distance arguably allowed for a critical eye on the material.

PART 2: THE TRIPARTITE APPROACH: A TRANSFERABLE METHODOLOGICAL ENQUIRY

4.4 THE TRIPARTITE APPROACH: WHISPERS, ECHOES AND TALL TALES:⁸³

[...] a box is not a box simply because others say it is, but it becomes a certain kind of box once we paint the walls black, hang lights in it, and start moving around inside. Therefore, perspective is shaped by interaction and how each interaction differs
(Tracy and Shaffer 2009:2).

The Reader is invited to consult the accompanying Photobook of *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* on pages 48 – 63. A film and audio files of the event can be found on the USB.

Title: *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*
Venue: Foundry Studio, Aberystwyth
Date: 11 and 12 June 2015
Duration: 45 min
Audience Capacity: 40 in total
Format: Open studio, audience free to roam
Performers: One

For my third and final practice enquiry, I designed an approach that would use the concept of performance events, their documentary remains (including both artistic and administrative documents), the inclusion of oral histories, and an evocation of the original site in which the performances took place. Using this process, I conceived *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* – a performance that invited audience members into a ‘constructed’ sense of place that attempted to evoke Chapter. By construction, I refer to the use of chalk to map out the different spaces that were used in Pip Simmons’s production in 1977 in another location, using a floor plan I

⁸³ To view the script the reader is invited to access the Appendices situated at the end of the thesis under the title ‘Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales’ script.

had extracted from the archives. These ‘rooms’ that I laid out determined the way in which I would travel round the studio. It was a sparsely designed performance, allowing the audience to roam freely within the different spaces I had delineated. It was a studio-based performance that combined the narrative of *Woyzeck* with that of the history of Chapter. By employing performance material, documents and the story of a venue, what this final PaR did was test out my tripartite approach that, to reiterate, involves and is considering the relationship between Venue – Performance – Document.

What this performance attempted to do was to re-place the archive, something that worked on two levels: firstly, to physically transfer the archive into another setting to which it has no relationship; and secondly, to signal a shift in the format in which the archive was transferred – from document to live performance. The practical experiment attempted to establish whether I could, through reconstruction, understand the relationship between Chapter and its past performances.

The work explored whether a site can become a container of sorts for creating a sense of (another) place. Throughout, I was interested in investigating the role that document(ary) remains and memories play in such an evocation, as well as questioning whether place can be performed in the absence of the original place itself. Finally, I wanted to determine whether I could establish an understanding of the relationship between the venue and its performance history using reconstructive approaches, which has remained my primary focus.

For the live event, I chose to use a studio at my own university. The Foundry is a black box studio with the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies at Aberystwyth University.

The Reader is invited to consult the accompanying Photobook and to see a picture of the studio on page 50.

Using a black box studio enabled me to play with a blank canvas where I could outline an area that could somehow evoke the layout of Chapter. I wanted to performatively and physically enact Chapter's story, creating a sense of past *and* present. It was here that I expanded on the idea of ghosting and that of evocation, considering where, and within what, traces might remain. André Lepecki argues that '[h]aunting, understood as a sociological effect that unleashes historicity, adds an affective component to the current politics of re-enacting in dance. Avery Gordon deliberated on the performative and political force of what she called "ghostly matter" to propose that "such endings that are not over is what haunting is about"' (Lepecki 2010: 41). It was with this in mind that I wanted to explore haunting and the evocation of qualities within the story of Chapter.

I constructed the set and the spatial configuration using cardboard boxes. To summarise, I had borrowed around one-hundred specially-made cubic boxes from a local artist in Aberystwyth.⁸⁴ The insides of these boxes are reinforced with cardboard to allow them to be built into strong structures that could be stood on. These boxes suggested to me an archive – as collection. But they also signalled the archive – as architecture – throughout the whole piece – as they were used both as props and set.

The Reader is invited to consult the accompanying Photobook and to see a picture of the boxes on page 51.

The devising process for *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* was one of amalgamation. In taking the Pip Simmons documents from Chapter, Arts Council material from the National Library of Wales and the V&A's Theatre and Performance Archive, I found that I had a more nuanced understanding of Chapter as a venue at that time. This was further elaborated through using the

⁸⁴ The artist Jenny Hall designed and had these boxes made. Hall is currently engaged in an installation piece called *Hollow*, which she installs at various venues across Wales, where she invites audience into her constructions.

oral history interviews I organised with Christine Kinsey and Mik Flood, as well as other artists of the 1970s.⁸⁵ Initially, I had simply planned the oral history interviews as an information-gathering exercise, but after listening to them repeatedly, their evocative quality leant themselves to a performance form of exposition and their first-hand experiences of Chapter added to the evocation within the constructed place. Heike Roms writes of the importance of using oral histories for her own events, stating:

[...] by making an audience present and staging the events in the public domain, I wanted to call attention to the inherent performative and public nature of the interview situation and reveal that the purpose of any oral history interview is to transform personal memories into shared histories (2008: xi).

This is what I too was concerned with: I wanted to situate the interview with its performative nature into the performance setting – something I suggest that aids the reconstructive process and allows an understanding of past events to be made much more explicit. It was also the case that the interview I conducted with Mik Flood, Sheila Burnett, Chris Jordan and Roland Denning was not particularly valuable as an academic resource because there were too many interruptions and digressions. However, as a performative text it was a rich soundtrack in which to use. I felt I had more freedom to combine voices within a performance context but still transmit a sense of history.

The Reader is invited to consult page 52 of the accompanying Photobook to listen to track: 3 on the USB which connects Flood and Kinsey's accounts of Chapter's beginnings.

In discussing audiences, Matthew Reason summarises Eugenio Barba, who declares '[...] that the performance is not really what *was* happening on stage but what *is* happening in the minds and subsequently the memories of the audience' (2006: 51). This is also true of the oral history

⁸⁵ Roland Denning, Geoff Moore, Dave Southern and Nigel Watson.

memories that I collected from the likes of Flood, Kinsey and members of the Pip Simmons group with regards to what was happening at the time of the performance – the policies that influenced the making of the performance. These recollections are, I contend, of equal importance to physical documentation. This was certainly a major concern in creating a narrative that employed a variety of materials – what *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* did was tell a story that was rooted in factual events but expressed in a way that was fictional and almost fantastical in its delivery. The fact that the memories live on in those people that established Chapter as a venue suggests that there is still a story to be told; my process became about developing ways in which to express that still active story. Their disembodied voices gave them presence within the project, and they clearly described the relationship that the founders wanted to have with their visiting theatre companies. By placing the voices in the performance space and embodying them, or simply making them live, the history of Chapter became more immediate and visceral for the audience watching it.

In discussing archival research and improper memory, Matthew Reason remarks ‘[...] the perception that permanent records of live performance are metaphorical replacements for fragile human memory is a prominent and lasting element of discourses of documentation’ (2006: 49). I found that memory was no more fragile than the physical document remains. The document remains were not necessarily cohesive; the memory added further substance to the documentary account, ‘[...] if we value performance in terms of its time-based transience, its disappearance, then memory must be a more appropriate site for any trace or afterlife than the frozen and unchanging archive’ (Reason 2006: 51).

After researching the *Woyzeck* production, I wanted to somehow embed the knowledge and perceptions I had gained from this into my final work of practice without it ever being a re-enactment. This production was an important milestone in both Chapter’s history and in my research and, including its original style or narrative into the structure of my own presentation

was a significant concern. What I decided to try and achieve was to create a performance that used the original journey that The Pip Simmons Theatre Group devised around the spaces of Chapter for *Woyzeck*: Theatre, Cinema, Gallery, Studio, Bar, Loading Dock, Yard. I achieved this by marking out the rooms – following a floor plan of Chapter – used in the performance in chalk on the floor of the Foundry studio. This would mirror the spatiality of Chapter and determine the route I would travel in order relate the narrative I had woven together.

The Reader is again invited to examine the photograph on page 50 of the Photobook which shows the floor plan of Chapter that was used to mark out the floor in the Foundry Studio, Aberystwyth

After marking out the rooms, I could also then decide what style of performance and what event should be depicted within each space. I named each space after those that were used in the original; for example, in the Theatre was Scene One – the Barbershop. Within this space, I used theatrical spotlight lighting, and a rostrum representing a stage. The actions within the space echoed those that happened within the Barbershop scene, such as the action of shaving. The Cinema/Fairground was represented through a projection screen that I stood behind and physicalized moments from *Woyzeck* through a caricatured, circus style in silhouette for the audience.⁸⁶

The Reader is invited to examine the photographs of *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* on page 53 – 55 of the Photobook to examine how the screen was used.

⁸⁶ Further examples include the Gallery/Barracks, where soft lighting was used to light up plinths and the actions were repetitive to mimic those of a soldier; the studio/doctors was a single stand-alone lamp over a box. The Pawn shop/Loading dock was a small space with a flickering strip light, and the Bar/Tavern had 15 hanging bulbs. Each space was carefully planned out, depicting the mood and theme of the actual space and the represented spaces.

In the Theatre, I initially decided to use audio footage of Christine Kinsey that told the story of Chapter's founding, as I stood on the rostrum and performed towards the audience, echoing a formal theatrical arrangement.

The Reader is invited to consult page 52 of the accompanying Photobook to see the image of the "theatre" scene. This shows a rostra block that was used to represent a stage.

I later decided to learn the lines and thus 'embody' Kinsey; in this sense I was '[p]ushing the body into the archive, pushing the archive into the body—a mutual metamorphosis conjuring up, creating, secreting, excreting, inflecting critical points where virtuals and actuals exchange place' (Lepecki 2010: 37). Another moment that became clear was the decision to use the Bar as a reflection upon Chapter's first birthday party.⁸⁷

The Reader is invited to listen to track: 4, the music I used in the party scene. The bands were all invited to play at the Sophia Gardens event that the A.C.P.G organised to raise funds for an arts venue.

The structure that was developed allowed the spatial configuration of Chapter to be realised whilst also suggesting a clear journey in which to travel around the space for me as a performer, and consequently the audience members were then able to follow the journey by shadowing or witnessing my movements and actions. In this sense, the studio represented Chapter, but in no way became Chapter. As an audience member reflected:

I certainly did not read the Foundry studio as an alternative Chapter. For me the performance was at work in there – and not anywhere else. Then I began to read a sense of re-enactment in the room. The room and you the performer became re-

⁸⁷ As mentioned, artist Peter Kuttner made a visual art piece for Chapter's first birthday, called *Edible Rainbow*. The piece was made from an array of colourful food. I mimicked this through serving multi-coloured gin and tonics using food dye. A picture of this can be found on page 59 of the Photobook.

enactors – highly volatile sometimes – re-enactors of what then felt like an imaginary. Everything was referencing somewhere else (Audience 1: 2015).

As performer and researcher, I entered the ‘empty’ space of the studio and attempted to re-construct Chapter – from memory, interviews, documents and their interpretation. I wanted to create a multifaceted theatrical experience, one that would resonate with different people in different ways, depending on their personal relationship to Chapter. I knew I would be showing this work to people who had a longstanding relationship with the venue, and to others who had never been there.

As I began devising the work I began pondering the ‘empty space’, and of course one cannot ignore Peter Brook’s seminal statement: ‘I can take any empty space and call it a bare stage [...]’ (1968: 9). I was taken away from the overflowing abundance of Chapter – where the history is all encompassing, where the building, in a sense, is its history – to a bare studio where I alone was responsible for occupying it. However, it is not empty; its traditions and technologies of theatrical usage informed how I would use the space, how I would move in the space, how the space could be lit and how the location of the four audio speakers determined the siting of the recorded testimony. I, as the artist could manipulate this space to serve my own requirements. This ‘empty’ space, as McAuley outlines, ‘[...] draws attention to the function of the space itself; the empty space is here not simply the means of valorising the actor’s presence, [...] but the condition that alone makes possible the simultaneous presence of performer and watcher’ (2000: 3).

In constructing the space I was interested in combining various voices – those from recorded oral histories, those from written documents, and my own. The overall concept was that each voice would contribute to the account that I was attempting to generate.

Below is a table that depicts the running order and each scene:

Room	<i>Woyzeck</i> scene	Chapter moment
Whole of Chapter	N/A	Beginnings of Chapter
Theatre	Barbershop scene	Preparing Chapter for opening
Cinema	Fairground scene and a condensed run of <i>Woyzeck</i>	Chapter's theatre performances in its first decade
Gallery	Barracks scene	Chapter working on a treadmill mentality with the touring circuit
Artist's studio	Doctor's scene	Chapter in conversation with Arts Council of Wales
Whole of Chapter	Ragged aunt's story	Chapter's hopes and disillusionment
Bar	Tavern scene	Chapter's first birthday
Loading Dock of Theatre	Pawn shop scene	Christine and Bryan leaving Chapter
Chapter Yard	Murder scene	Changes in Chapter – to the present day
Returning to the Archive	N/A	Present day
Middle of "Chapter": Outside	End of <i>Woyzeck</i>	Present day

The performance

The Reader is invited to access the film on the USB: *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* to watch a 10minute edited version of the performance.

The Reader is also invited to examine the photographs from pages 52 – 66 of the Photobook which show the sequence of events.

The audience waited outside of the studio and I gestured them into the performance space. The room was dimly lit. A faint spotlight illuminated a wall of boxes as the audience entered the room; they were invited to stand in the cinema area of the space, which was marked by a large projection screen, and the performance began....

In large typewritten letters the words ‘Cardiff needs an arts centre, and Cardiff must have one’ were punched out on the projection screen for the audience to read, followed by music that blared out from the speakers as I attempted to push myself through the box construction. Eventually emerging, I picked up my boxes and began constructing each ‘scene’ around the audience, forcing them to reconsider their position in the space as I darted in between them and placed boxes in each location.

The space was constructed out of boxes and chalk dust – as the audience and I passed through the spaces the chalk dust was spread and the lines blurred. Footprints began filling the black spaces, reminding us all that we each have our own imprint on the performance and the site of the performance. The site was simultaneously being constructed and erased.

Once the set was complete, Christine Kinsey’s voice, followed by Mik Flood’s, filled the studio with their memories. As they recalled different early events, I occupied the spaces in which they evoked through their memories, allowing the audience to orientate themselves in my constructed space.

I ‘embodied’ those that spoke of their own history. I wove a narrative that belonged together but has never been read together. I took ownership of the archive and made it present through my presence.

Throughout the performance I occupied and animated each space I had laid out. From the Theatre to the Cinema, to the Gallery, to the Studio, to the mind of Pip Simmons, to the Bar, to the Loading Dock – before retreating to and releasing the archive as fragments. I was standing on and in between 100 boxes and the archive rained down on the audience – I had taken responsibility for the archive, I was performing place, as I wanted a place to be performed. I was faceless, I represented hundreds of faces, I embodied 45 years, I was ethereal, I was a researcher, I was a performance maker.

To see a collection of photographs together of *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, the reader is invited to look at page 67 of the Photobook.

In the initial stages, I wanted the audience to feel as if their presence somehow constructed the space, and an early proposal was that they too would travel from one ‘room’ to another – as they stepped into it, it would be illuminated and made a concrete reality. This would however prove too difficult, given the dimensions of the spaces I could realistically map out within the studio. Perhaps more importantly, it was my very presence that was indicating and activating the spaces, my embodiment of and relationship to the materials I was using that served to evoke the various locations and the associated sense of place. I am reminded here of The Performance Re-enactment Society’s *Group Show* (see Chapter Two) the words of their invigilators and presence, much like my own performance, was crucial in the evocation of the work they described.

The Reader is invited to consult page 56 of the accompanying Photobook to examine the photograph alongside Track: 5 on the USB. It was the voice of Dave Southern that created the images in this moment.

André Lepecki describes Martin Nachbar's performance of *Urheben Aufheben*,⁸⁸ and recalls that in this performance, Nachbar made the very process of making visible within the performance. Lepecki remarks how '[t]he whole evening is structured around Nachbar narrating how the process of creating the work unfolded first as a search and then as research' (2010: 36). I did not make the research process as explicit in my performance, but it was implicit through presence of boxes alluding to the archive. They indicated the overwhelming experience of being within an archive, as if my body and the bodies of audience members had been pushed into the archive. This echoes a moment in Nachbar's performance where he describes his procedures in the performance:

Ok, let's go back to the beginning: we had [the sections] "Entering the Archive". "Applied Recollection" and "Storehouse". Now what happens, if I don't just visit the storehouse but try and push my body into it and at the same time, allow the storehouse to push my body into it and at the same time, allow the storehouse to push itself into my body? Maybe the storehouse will be systematized and become an archive. And then the archive will become visible through my body [...]

(Taken from Nachbar's script in Lepecki 2010: 36).

In this sense, one of the most significant materials I worked with throughout my enquiry was the box and its myriad functions.

The Reader is invited to consult the accompanying Photobook and to see a picture of the boxes and their multi-use on page 60.

⁸⁸ 'Urheben Aufheben is a play on words and can mean three things: 1. To pick something created up from the floor. 2. To keep it. 3. To suspend the notion of authorship.' (Lepecki 2010: 36).

Boxes could be moved around, built and scattered, always hinting at the fluid, moveable and unstable relationship between archive and history.

In gathering responses from a range of audience members, I paid close regard to what their experience was, depending on their relationship with Chapter. The respondent who knew Chapter best remarked on the nostalgia they felt the performance evoked, whereas a respondent who has never been there said: 'It introduced me to Chapter in a way that is personal, unlike reading from a guide book. I have never been to Chapter and it makes me wonder what it is like now' (Audience 3: 2015). A respondent who has visited on occasions wrote that the performance 'was [...] an example of how histories can be told through meaning and feeling as well as fact. I also came away knowing far more about Chapter Arts than I had before I watched the performance' (Audience 4: 2015). In receiving this feedback I was able to better understand how *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* was experienced and interpreted by audience members, and appreciate how it functioned from the perspective of a witness rather than simply for me as the creator and performer.

This work expanded my thoughts on where the history of a place resides. I began to wonder whether it rests in the building, in the documents, in the memories of those who passed through the building, in my animation and embodiment through practice, or in the contemporary audience. I claimed and wove together elements of the history of Chapter; I manipulated them and mixed them up. Through this I discovered that it is not fixed or stable, and neither I came to realise, is the building in which it resides, for it has gone through many structural changes. What I contend is that archival documents can speak in the absence of site, but I argue only if spoken out.

In its archive alone, I argue that the traces, although vital, do not provide enough to evoke a place outside of its walls. The archive documents need close reading, and they need memory and flesh sewn into the fabric of material remains in order that a three-dimensional

impression of its history can be presented. The process and performance of *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* echoes Lepecki's description of Nachbar's process – '[...] archival particles went through his body and how his body went through archival particles and this movement formed a critical point from which something else could come out' (2010: 37). To echo Nachbar once more: '[n]ow, what happens, if I don't just visit the storehouse but try to push my body into it and at the same time, allow the storehouse to push itself into my body? [...] Then the archive will become visible through my body' (2010: 37). Through the reconstruction, which entailed even the outlining of the space, I hope that I laid open the archive through my body and my artistic decisions.

It could be argued that I, as the creator, decide what aspects of a place are significant – as I am the one 'constructing' the narrative. I presented what I wanted to be heard and seen. In one audio recording I used from an oral history interview with members of the Pip Simmons Theatre Group (Chris Jordan and Sheila Burnett), where they were trying to recall songs from the *Woyzeck* production – all they could remember was one line. I used this snippet in a repetitive sequence to demonstrate a period in Chapter's history when Mik Flood, one of the artistic directors felt dissatisfied with the commercialisation of the touring circuit. As a performer, I became more and more frantic constructing and deconstructing a box formation with the repetitive sounds on a loop. This reminds me of my previous statement on (mis)remembering in Chapter Two. Chris and Sheila were attempting to playfully recall the song by trying to sing lines that they clearly had forgotten, and this allowed me also to use it playfully within the reconstruction.

The Reader is invited to consult page 56 of the accompanying Photobook and listen to track: 6 on the USB.

Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales enabled an examination of the role that place plays within an artistic context. As earlier discussed, I did become interested in the venue, and it was sadly beyond my control that I was unable to perform there. Perhaps if I had performed in Chapter I would have been driven by their current agenda and it would become a celebration of a history, rather than an interrogation. In switching from the venue as the container to the archival and oral remains, shifted how a history might be communicated to others elsewhere.

Early in the research, I asked whether it should be the piece of work and the artist that always constitute the focus of enquiry; or whether it should be the venue – as walls, as concrete structure, as a place of happenings, as a space that enabled performance that might be acknowledged. In ‘performing place’ the work is outlined, encapsulated or evoked through activation. In ‘performing place’ we perform policies, we perform experience and memory, we perform an identity – not simply of one event, or one artist, but a whole series of events that have shaped a venue, and therefore shaped an artistic past. The overriding question is whether or not places need to be physically present in order for their essential nature to be evoked, as indeed they are in site-specific practices. Certainly for the Trace Collective piece *Trace: Displaced* a scale-model of their site acted as a representation (see Chapter Two), and this was the case for my floor plan representation of Chapter – I evoked a sense of place.

In discussing Julie Tolentino’s performance *Self Obliteration #1*⁸⁹ – in her programme of work *The Sky Remains the Same* (2008) – André Lepecki remarks how she ‘[...] explicitly aimed at turning her body into an archive’. In this piece, which was based on a Ron Athey performance, Tolentino imitated the performance that Athey carried out, and archived it during its run. As Lepecki rightly points out:

[t]he body as archivist is one thing. The body as archive is quite another. Tolentino’s project performs an intriguing short-circuiting of all sorts of pre-conceptions of what a document is, while revealing what a body might have always been: a body may have always already been nothing other than an archive (2010: 34).

⁸⁹ This is the title of Ron Athey’s work that Tolentino was re-enacting alongside him.

In further substantiating this claim, Lepecki suggests ‘[...] that the performativity of the will to archive in *The Sky Remains the Same* considers and reveals how re-enacting is an affective mode of historicity that harnesses futurities by releasing pastness away from its many archival “domiciliations” (2010: 34 - 35). What Lepecki offers here is a view to the archive as something rooted in the present.

4.5 CONCLUSION

These final two chapters have offered both an analysis of and a reflection on process and outcomes of the research for this thesis. By presenting a written historical account and an account of practical outputs, I have demonstrated how and in what ways history survives and how this history can be transmitted and explored today. I do not present an exhaustive list of methodological approaches to research dissemination, but in presenting what I consider to be complementary approaches; I have offered alternative ways in which to review and process documentary information. It is here that I suggest that my approach to PaR, via modes of reconstruction, in fact enables a more nuanced understanding of the interplay between the venue, its policies and the performance work produced. Undertaking oral history interviews and implementing them into practice-based research has been an invaluable source to draw from, and further allowed the history in the live moment to be felt and experienced.

Furthermore, I suggested that the venue – performance – document should be approached as a tripartite model to further understand venues and their relationship to their performance history. The discussion on *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* has demonstrated that there is interplay between all three elements. The venue (Chapter) as the host and enabler of the work, the performance (*Woyzeck*) happened within the venue that produced it, and finally the documentary remains (archives) that talk of the venue and the performance, often simultaneously. The three components always worked together, even in *Whispers, Echoes and*

Tall Tales, although the venue was physically absent it was evoked in the reconstruction and I was able to uncover and communicate the relationship that Chapter had with its performance(s).

The Reader is invited to listen to track: 7 on the USB:
Shelia Burnett, Chris Jordan, Roland Denning and Mik
Flood reflect on their collaboration.

THESIS CONCLUSION

Within this thesis I have investigated how we might begin to understand a venue's relationship to its past performance works – particularly works emanating from the 'alternative' theatre of the 1970s – with the aim of looking to former policies in order to generate innovative performances for today. I have argued that using a methodology based on live performance makes history physically present in a vital and experiential sense, and that such a methodology should be taken seriously as an approach to examining the contemporary relevance of engaging with history.

To ensure an in-depth study, the thesis has focused on early alternative theatre work that was produced and hosted at Chapter Arts Centre in Cardiff in the 1970s, which has served as a major case study for the research. Chapter has been a multi-form arts venue from its beginnings; yet, as this thesis has argued, performance was central to its operations in the 1970s. It was the experimentations of alternative theatre work that demanded a different and unique relationship between performance and the venue; and this relationship has generated only a fragmentary documentary record in the archive.

Fusing venue – performance – document – which are, I posit, the main components of a venue's history – within a tripartite approach has enabled me to reconstruct the historical relationship between venue and performance. It has also allowed me to develop a methodological enquiry that could be adopted and adapted by similar venues who are interested in exploring their own alternative performance history. Undertaking such research can, I suggest, open new dialogues about the impact of making and seeing alternative theatre within arts venues. It allows for a consideration of the contemporary relevance of reaching back to former approaches to making and producing theatre and engaging audiences with it.

This thesis has explored three main research questions, and has addressed them as follows:

1. What methodologies must we apply to reconstructively acquire knowledge about the relationship between a venue and its performance history; and how can these methodologies become transferable?

Regarding the first question, I proposed that the three components important to the history of alternative theatre and its venues are venue – performance – document. I considered the available literature on site-specific performance in order to understand how the relationship between venue and performance has been theorized; the literature on archive and performance to understand the nature and relevance of archival documents for performance histories; and the literature on re-enactment, to examine scholarly approaches to the embodied performative engagement with history. What became clear was that literature on site-specific theatre considers the relationship of performance and site within contemporary work, but a consideration of the historical relationship between performance and venue is missing from the debate. Archive and re-enactment literature, on the other hand, considers performances in their relationship to past events and documents, but not the site in which the events took place.

The methodology that was conceived was based on the notion of reconstruction (rather than re-enactment), and, as I have outlined, it was applied both in a written format and in live performance. In offering two modes of reconstruction I have been able to investigate how and in what way the two enable and inform one another. The material reconstruction (Chapter Three) brought together archival documents and oral histories in a more traditional historical research approach, yet it was not able to evoke a sense of the place, nor consider the venue itself as an archive. Without a form of embodiment, I propose, writing as a body of transferable knowledge can only engage with parts of the history of performance. The written component was able to communicate a history, but one that was relatively artificial in its linear chronology and causality; whereas a live and immediate performance approach has the capacity to reach an audience in a different, more experiential and embodied manner, and allow for some of the complexities and contradictions of a history to be expressed. Creating something experiential

brings people together and allows for shared memories to be negotiated, conversations and potential plans to be made – therefore removing a history from something locked away in an archive and transforming it into something evocative and aimed at the future. I suggest that the shared nature of live work allows for a dialogue about the potential of engaging in a history of a venue and renders it transferable. To this end, the thesis has combined the method of reconstruction and the tripartite approach through performance practice.

2. How might considering the three constituents of a venue's history (its physical site, its past events and its archival remains) enable live performance activation that allows for the venue's history to become experiential and open it for evaluation?

The second question has been addressed through the tripartite model I have developed. The three aspects of this model – venue – performance – document – were, as discussed, first considered in Chapter One within their separate fields; and as I moved through the thesis I began considering them together as active agents. The tripartite approach came into fruition in applying a practice-based enquiry, described here in Chapter Four, where a discussion of three Practice-as-Research experiments was delivered. The first two enquiries (staged in Chapter and Camden's People Theatre respectively) addressed – through contemporary performance – two of the three aspects of the tripartite model: (past) performance and document; and venue and document. I have examined what these two experiments were able to reveal about a venue; and I concluded that without a full enactment of the tripartite approach the information generated lacked transferable and evaluative capacity. Whilst the first experiment, *Playing (at) Woyzeck*, explored a past performance and its documents, the venue's own history was not considered. Creating a live performance of documents that had been stored away was a step forward in thinking differently about a venue's history and its impact on experimental performance practices; however, by not explicitly evoking the venue it was, I posit, lacking in its capacity to offer the history to a contemporary evaluation. As a result, I argue, it was not possible to

consider sufficiently the impact that the venue's past policies had on the work. With regards to my second piece of practice, *Turning the Spotlight on the People*, I evoked and considered the venue, however, by not drawing on specific performance practices it did not sufficiently draw on its history and its role in experimental performance practices.

I suggest that by considering the three constituents of a venue's history (its physical site, its past events and its archive) the third and final performance experiment - *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* - enabled an important aspect of the performance history of Chapter to be revealed. And this reveal potentially allows for that history to be examined, engaged with and acted upon in the present. It was through this practice experiment that I was able to exemplify Lepecki's concept of a generative and active archive (2010), something I argue is currently missing from archival reconstruction.

3. To what extent can a venue itself be considered an archive of the performances that occurred there?

Finally, in addressing the third question, Chapters One and Two explored the notion of the venue as performance archive most prominently. I have reviewed relevant current literature on the themes of site/archive/re-enactment in Chapter One; and I have argued that there is a lack of consideration in the literature of the venue as an archive of performance – even in discussions on site and ghosting. An exception is Kelina Gotman's 2015 article, which suggests that an attention to the role of venue in performance history is a recent development. I have also reviewed artistic and scholarly research practices that have explored the notion of venue as performance archive, either directly or indirectly in Chapter Two. Academics and practitioners that have engaged in using the venue as a key component in their own work played a significant role in informing my own methodology, and by exploring the work of the Performance Re-enactment Society (PRS), Performing Documents, Heike Roms, Trace, Clare

Thornton and The Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA), I was able to extract techniques and then build on them. I then further examined the relationship of venue – performance – document through the application of a practice-based research methodology as discussed in Chapter Four, the elements of which were outlined in Chapter Two of the thesis.

I have suggested that the venue can be considered an archive, but only – I contend – when the venue's architecture is somehow used as a physical mnemonic trigger, as was seen with Heike Roms's *How to Build an Arts Centre? An Audio Guide* (2011) and with PRS's *Group Show* (2011). With regards to my own research I argue that I was able to use the architectural features of Chapter in my final practice experiment, *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, to evoke memories from people who were familiar with Chapter's past, therefore evoking the venue as its own archive. Through a recording of the memories of those who set up the venue, my embodiment of the history and my architectural floor plan of Chapter, I could address Chapter as its own archive; however, this became only transparent in relation to the two other elements – the documents and performance.

Similarly, *Turning the Spotlight on the People* was a performance that directly explored the venue as its own archive. However, by not taking into account past performances shown at the venue and instead just focusing on its administrative history, it again lacked the capacity to offer a proper evaluation of the venue's history; after all it is the performances (taking place within a theatre venue) that gives the venue its identity, and in disregarding this I was unable to successfully communicate a full history and potential impact. Finally, all three elements were brought together in the concluding performance *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales*, which communicated the history of a venue and examined its impact as a leading artistic venue, thus opening up the history for a present-day evaluation. In evoking a specific location, a past performance that took place there and in animating its documents, I argue that I successfully

reconstructed the relationship between them and communicated in an experiential manner a history otherwise stored away.

To consider the implications of this research further, in July 2016 I interviewed Chapter's current Director, Andy Eagle, and Chapter's Director of Visual Arts and Programme, Hannah Firth.⁹⁰ The interviews focused upon the archive as a resource for Chapter and the value of reaching back to former policies to inform the art centre's current approaches to making and hosting alternative performance. Eagle and Firth were interviewed on separate occasions; however, in the following I am editing both interviews together to understand more fully their respective positions on the topics raised. I used the same questions for both interviews and below are extracts of their answers:⁹¹

I asked whether the Chapter archive is a valuable resource for them. Hannah Firth, who comes from a visual art background, confirmed that: *I think it's a really valuable tool and it's something certainly in the visual arts department that we hold very dear. We actually have a relatively full archive already online, which we've kept since I started in 2001, so you can actually look through the history of our gallery [...] (Firth: 2016).*

She continued by explaining how their visual artists interact with the history:

When we are working with artists they regularly want to reflect on some of the history, either on the building or the use of the building since it became an arts centre, or of the most recent uses of it. So it's certainly very current in terms of how contemporary practitioners want to engage with Chapter as an organisation and as a building. I think in some senses it's become more and more valuable and I certainly think that we need to dig deep into the history of the arts centre and preserve that history in order to inform practice going forward. I think certainly the reflection on the archive is extremely valuable (Firth: 2016).

This demonstrates the significant shift that had taken place in the attitude towards the archive from when I began the research to its completion. It was not that the archive was being actively dismissed by Chapter staff throughout the research, but rather it was a resource that was unable

⁹⁰ Hannah Firth was deputising as Chapter's Director while Eagle was on paternity leave.

⁹¹ I interviewed Andy Eagle on the 13 July and Hannah Firth on the 14 July. Both interviews were conducted at Chapter.

to be fully explored by them. Firth explained that this was due to the fact that in 2012, at the start of my research project, Andy Eagle had only just started at Chapter, and during this period there was uncertainty about roles, strategies and financial commitments that needed to be dealt with first. Hannah remarked that if the PhD project began now (2016), in the run up to Chapter's 50th anniversary, the venue would be able to support it more fully. Eagle mentioned that plans for Chapter's 50th year celebrations include a book, for which the archive will be a vital resource to tap into. What was noticeable in both Eagle and Firth's responses was the renewed focus on the art centre's heritage and on the archive as resource.

I explained that during my research I visited the Centre for Contemporary Arts (CCA) in Glasgow, and how CCA's artistic director Francis McKee is using their archives to learn from old policies for the running of the venue. I asked whether Chapter staff thought it was valuable or possible for venues to reach back to former strategies and whether arts venues can learn from them. Eagle's response was:

I think the past can inform the present [...]. I think looking back into the archive to how we did things and remembering the roots of the organisation – absolutely. Chapter came very much out of the local artistic community and one of the things I have been very mindful to do is to still embrace that and put artist's development in [...] as one of our key drivers [...] because I think that's the basis that formed Chapter, at the end of the day it was six artists who set it up and I think we'd be wrong to lose sight of that. There's no harm in reminding ourselves of that and going back to look over the past [...] artists were here in the 1970s and they're here in 2016. It can and does inform [...] there's an awful lot to be said sometimes about simplicity [...] sometimes it's good to just focus on your core activities (Eagle: 2016).

Extending this question I spoke about Chapter's former collaborative approach to working between the venue as producers and the incoming artists, and I asked Eagle and Firth whether this is still a viable way of working now. Hannah Firth responded by speaking at length about the problems they are faced with:

I think it's certainly possible, I think it's something that we do. Perhaps not quite with the same level of investment in terms of our staff time which is a really valuable resource that often isn't considered in the scheme of things. We've got a reduced staff team; cuts in funding have meant we've had to streamline [...] Having said that we've

got a programme team that work across all art forms [...]. We do a range of residences [Visual artists] [...]. I think with the theatre and more performance side of things it's much more difficult because we're balancing a really challenging budget, which requires we bring in higher income against wanting to position artists at the core of what we do, and that's a constant battle. [...] It's much harder but we're finding ways of working through the tricky funding scenarios that we're in now and that might be that we can't necessarily provide cash support but we can provide space and we can provide staff knowledge and support. [...] I do feel, certainly in the last five years that we really have started to go back to what we should be all about, which is grass roots level support but with international ambition. So we're working in the local but thinking really globally about what we do (Firth: 2016)

The budgetary concerns that Firth's response identifies were also raised in Andy Eagle's response. He spoke more about the financial situation and the strains that artistic venues are under to being in revenue:

Chapter has a perceived heyday, which is the 70s, 80s and probably a bit of the 90s as well. And I still think it's in its heyday, it's just evolved and changed. It's a different beast to what it was then. But running an organisation like this is far more, I wouldn't say it's financially driven but it has to be far more financially aware. [...] Ten, fifteen years ago when Chapter was about to go bankrupt, as it did a couple of times, in the 80s and 90s, funds from the Arts Council, or whoever, would help it keep going. [...] I was sat on an Arts Council committee back in 2003 that approved £1.2 million of sustainability funding for Chapter. The idea was that you invest this money and it becomes sustainable. Well that was done in 2003 and I started in 2011 – it clearly wasn't sustainable. So, in 2011 and in 2016 those funds are just not there. So you have to be far more financially prudent. And that does inevitably dictate what you then do artistically. The key is to be as artistically exciting as you can and be responsible with the budget and I think one of the things I've instilled in Chapter is far more budget responsibility compared to what there used to be. (Eagle: 2016).

I could not help but think back to Mik Flood's statement from 1979, outlining his fears:

I have a great fear of becoming institutionalised. The reason why places like this sprang up was because there were not the possibilities for the kind of art we were interested in to be presented in established theatres. Places like ours are in danger of going that way, once they get smooth administration. Once you have responsibility for the taxpayers' money, you have to do things right and above board that are totally reconcilable with your financial masters (Barker, C, 1979: 17).

This is not a criticism of the subsequent institutionalisation of Chapter; on the contrary, I do not think it could have survived without greater institutional formation. However, it is interesting to note Flood's foresight on the matter. It is even more interesting to reflect on

Flood's statement when coupled with Eagle's candid response to why a collaborative approach to working with artistic companies or artists on an exclusivity level is not possible today:

The days of bringing in a group for a UK exclusive from Poland or Hong Kong are gone forever; whether that's in the theatre or visual arts, those days are gone. There's ways of having collaborations but there has to be far more layers of partnership. It might happen if there were say ten partners in the UK getting together. So you wouldn't have a Chapter exclusive but you might be part of a tour [...] the end product is the same but you haven't got the exclusivity. The whole process becomes a lot more cumbersome, labour reliant, capacity reliant [...]. There's lots of obstacles to actually getting things off the ground that are perhaps perceived as exciting and as unique as they were twenty years ago. They are exciting and they are unique, just in another way. I think Chapter is one of those organisations that is a little burdened by its history. Which is good because people care. But people sometimes hark back for the old Chapter as opposed to embracing the new Chapter [...](Eagle: 2016).

Idealism, naivety or hope aside, I could not help feeling that the bureaucracy that artistic venues are faced with today hinders their freedom and creativity. However, I argue that in engaging in a research project that privileges a collaborative approach to working, venues can engage with a former approach to making alternative theatre that complements today's artistic climate. In signifying and highlighting former approaches to working, I suggest that venues could build towards adopting adapted approaches. This can be seen with CCA's approach to their archive. As McKee notes in his interview with me:

We [...] contacted a group called Prons Pea, and they were a group of young artists interesting in doing fast projects, so we contacted them and asked them if they would [...] like to look at the archive and make new work. So we kept one of the spaces back and were able to commission young artists to investigate the archive and react to it and create new work from young people. That was really important as the big question facing us was why bother, what was the point, why should any one care? And one point was to connect it to contemporary art and say contemporary young artists are interested in the history and want to have a dialogue with that and also create new work and we're still about creating new work, not about nostalgia for the past. It always has to be about the future, not the past. (McKee: 2014).

Though McKee is not talking about exclusive residences here of the kind run by Chapter in the 1970s, it is interesting to reflect on the eagerness expressed here to bring in artists that could create new work from the archive, always looking forward but taking something from the past.

On a small scale, such a creation from the archive was achieved at a presentation evening arranged for Chapter's Friends⁹² and some invited guests from Chapter's history.⁹³ It was hosted within Chapter's First Space on July 14, 2016, and attended by fifty guests. This evening enabled me to further substantiate my enquiries and allowed me to think about the transferability of the thesis's methodology in a real-life context. This was a particularly important moment in the PhD as it is, as discussed, a Collaborative Doctoral Award, and therefore disseminating part of the research in the venue in which the research was partnered with would always have resonance beyond an academic context.

Between 2013 and 2015 I met with some key figures from Chapter's past and some of them were able to attend the event, including founding member, Christine Kinsey; artist, Mike Pearson; Liz Macpherson, an early member of Chapter's staff; Geoff Moore, director of Moving Being; Everyman Theatre members, Richard Watson and Gerry Watson; former artistic director, Janek Alexander; and Steve Allison, who organised the Chapter benefit concert in Sophia Gardens in February 1970 featuring Pink Floyd. The evening was advertised as an 'archive event', and it was the first time I had the opportunity to share some of the work within Chapter since *Playing (at) Woyzeck* (2013).

The evening began with a drinks reception. Old friends mingled and people who have a long-standing relationship with Chapter seemed excited about hearing its history being recounted. Cardiff TV interviewed me about the event, and there seemed to be excitement about Chapter's history being shared. (One of the audience members later remarked how insightful it was for him, as he only started coming to Chapter in the 1980s and hearing about its inception helped fill in the gaps in his knowledge.)

⁹² Chapter has a Friends scheme, which offers people discounted tickets and invites to special events for a regular subscription. See <http://www.chapter.org/chapter-friends>. [Date Accessed: 14 July 2016].

⁹³ The evening was organised by Elaina Johnson, Chapter's Development Manager, Jennifer Kirkham, Chapter's Development Assistant, and myself.

We gathered in First Space, a conference venue on Chapter's ground floor that was, during the *Woyzeck* period, the art centre's bar. The all-purpose meeting room is now a far cry from the parties of its early years.

To begin the sharing, I delivered a twenty-minute presentation that included visual and audio material from my research period. I wanted to create a schematic narrative of the 1970s that would provide a context for those who were not there and remind those that were. The occasional chuckle and nod of recognition confirmed my hopes in doing this.

The Reader is invited consult the accompanying documentation through pages 68 - 73 to see photographs of the evening and to access the footage of the evening, the reader is invited to follow the following link:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJuGO-rJN2g>

After providing a short history, I focused my talk upon *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* (2015), explaining to my audience how I attempted to weave an impression of Chapter's past, its architecture, its performance history and its documents into one performance. It was interesting to consider what this meant to a non-specialist audience, thinking about the value and impact of what I was sharing beyond the PhD.

The presentation was followed by two conversations – with Christine Kinsey and Mike Pearson – with the aim of sharing memories and stimulating conversations with and within the audience. This they successfully achieved as people were keen to share their own experiences. Kinsey brought original visual material including an original poster for the Sophia Gardens benefit that arose much discussion.

As an evening of public engagement, it was a success as it not only attracted fifty audience members, but it was also live streamed on YouTube due to the high demand for

tickets; it has subsequently been archived on Chapter's website. It was also an evening that stimulated those who work at Chapter now to think beyond the research to consider the longevity of their archive and what value it has. There were conversations about further events coming out of the research and certainly out of their archive, especially as Chapter approaches its fiftieth year in 2021.

The talk prompted me to think further on the necessity of making my PaR projects in unrelated venues, and about the research's transferability. *Turning the Spotlight on the People* was made in and about Camden People's Theatre (London), and therefore is evidence that other venues can use this approach to engage in their history. With regards to thinking beyond the PhD, the approaches to making work from an archive have personally been transferable for my own practice as a theatre practitioner. Since delivering my work to a public audience in Aberystwyth, I have been asked to organise a workshop at Ceredigion Museum using the same format, but with children. The transferability of the methodology therefore certainly has an element of public engagement impact. This further opens out the approach and I suggest that artists in residencies could also work within non art-based settings, such as government buildings, libraries, science laboratories, to consider how their history is stored and more importantly transmitted. This would allow aspects of an archive to be translated for an outside public, and also leave gaps and space for them and their public to remember and make connections with their own lives, as well as exploring the day-to-day running of a place.

For some researchers, the written component of the research would have been substantial enough, its linearity and its preserved nature offers permanence that the ephemeral performance acts arguably cannot. However, as a performance maker and researcher, the process of reconstructing the relationship between the different elements of a venue's history through interpretation and then embodiment is an approach that offers new insights into such research. Here I am reminded of Diana Taylor who explores performative acts as history:

Performances [...] tell a different history—one that is all about people and place, but not in any linear sense. [...] The past might be conceived not only as a timeline—accessed as a leap backwards, and forward to the present again—but also as a multilayered sedimentation, a form of vertical density rather than a horizontal sweep—not an either/or but a both/and (2006: 83).

By reconstructing Chapter's history and its approach to making and presenting performances, I have created a methodology that, as an on-going venue today, it could employ in order to engage in its own heritage and perhaps recover former policies. To conclude, I propose that artistic venues (and indeed other institutions) might pay closer attention to their own historical policies to inform present day initiatives, and suggest, as Francis McKee advocates, that we reach back in order to move forward (McKee: 2014). On this note, I finish this conclusion with a remark from Eugenio Barba:

Work has its roots in the present, attentive to what happens in the expanses of history and in the arena of the theatre. It attempts to answer the questions, both professional and personal, which arise day by day. It tries to make dreams and desires come true, complying with the obligations of the moment. But what really matters is *what will be said afterwards when we who worked at the task are gone* (1992: 77, emphasis added).

This quote makes me think of past projects and their legacy – specifically what happens to performances once they become archived – and of the past's potential to inform the present and perhaps future; and furthermore, of those projects that in the future will no longer have access to living memory to aid their legacy. I have argued that the venue, as a physical remain, should be considered an archive of the past work, but *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* opened up the possibility that perhaps the building as the host to the past work loses any claim on it once it has ended. The venue changes over time, its walls shift, its spaces extend until the building becomes unrecognisable, even to the most familiar of audience member. Perhaps the building has no claim on its past, because what happens within it has to happen for today, as Andy Eagle remarked in his interview. But there was something about sharing a room within Chapter's walls with many of its current and past audience members, artists and staff,

exchanging memories and pondering Chapter's role within the ecology of innovative performance, which suggested that perhaps its corridors and rooms are still haunted by its past events, and that these ghosts will continue to linger.

AFTERWORD

I am at the end of my final piece of practice. I stand upon the archive; I have reconstructed it and I have destroyed it. Its fragmented parts rain down, landing in my hair and on my body. I walk into the audience and I am motionless. I wear the fragments of my research – I literally embody it as I stand amongst the audience, who stand in my constructed Chapter Arts Centre. The lines of the building I have drawn have blended; it no longer resembles the floor plan I carefully worked from. Instead it has become trampled on, erased, blurred, a mark of the audience and the performer's presence. It acts as a reminder that *Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales* was about displacement. The archives did not belong in the space in which I performed them, yet they were reconstructed, taken from the page and given a narrative, one that represented a place, a time and an era. This research has come to an end; Chapter's archive was tapped into and reconstructed. Something was awoken.

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Bayes, N., and Norworth, J., (1908) *Shine on Harvest Moon*.

Black Sabbath., (1970) *Paranoid*, Vertigo, UK and Warner Bros. USA.

Blur., (1994) *Parklife*, Food Records, UK.

Cyrus, M., (2013) *Wrecking Ball*, RCA, USA.

D.Ream (1994) *Things Can Only Get Better*, Magnet Records, UK.

Pink Floyd., (1970) *If*, Harvest Label, UK.

Quintessence., (1970) *Only Love*, Island Records, UK.

Sia., (2014) *Chandelier*, Inertia, Australia.

The Rembrandts., (1994) *I'll Be There For You*, East Way Records, USA.

Watson, P., (2012) *Lighthouse*, Secret City Records, Canada.

USB Tracks

(Track: 1) Ali Matthews, *We'll Meet Again*: Lynn, V., (1939) *We'll Meet Again*, with music and lyrics composed and written by Ross Parker and Hughie Charles.

(Track: 2) Kerrie Reading, *Playing (at) Woyzeck*.

(Track: 3) Christine Kinsey and Mik Flood, edited from separate interviews, 25 March 2013 and 19 November 2013.

(Track: 4) Dave Southern, edited from original interview, recorded on 15 June 2014.

(Track: 5) Chris Jordan and Sheila Burnett, edited from original interview recorded on 19 November 2013.

(Track: 6) Party Mix: *If* by Pink Floyd, *Paranoid* by Black Sabbath and *Only Love* by Quintessence.

(Track: 7) Sheila Burnett, Chris Jordan, Roland Denning and Mik Flood, edited from original interview recorded on 19 November 2013.

APPENDICES

Pip Simmons Research

Ansorge

Disrupting the spectacle

30 – 35

‘a typical evening in the company of the Pip Simmons Group combined the energy of a football match or pop concert with a decisive attack on mainstream liberal values.’ The shows were steeped in cynicism, excitement, despair and good music’ (30).

‘the role of music in Pip Simmons’ shows is very important; explosions in musical fashions are frequently and ironically related to wider explosions in society: they tend to witness and embody an imminent sense of collapse’ (32).

Woyzeck IN Cardiff

Chris Stuart

Plays and Players, February 1978

28 – 29

Buchner’s text

Vaguely drawn characters

Outline of a plot

Seven scenes

Theatre = barber shop

Cinema – a showground entertainment parlour

Artist’s workshop – grotesque laboratory

Art exhibition space – a spread-eagled barracks room

Yard – skull lake

Candyfloss, souvenir, tee-shirts, chestnuts and drink

‘Members of Cardiff theatre groups, costumed and to some extent scripted, act as spectators and stand among the genuine ones’ (1978: 28)

5 weeks in London to get the piece started

final two weeks in Chapter

£7,000

Rough Magic

Michael Coveney

On the tenth anniversary of the Pip Simmons Theatre Group

Spaces/scenes in Woyzeck

- Barber’s - theatre
- Cinema – fairground

- Art exhibition space – barracks
- Workshop – doctors
- Bar – tavern
- Loading Dock - Pawnshop
- Yard – Lake and (Guillotine?)

<u>Büchner's text</u>	<u>Simmons</u>
Woyzeck	Drum Major
Captain	The idiot
Andres	Marie
Old man with Hurdy	The Showgirl
Gurdy	Deliah
Barker	Showman
Drum Major	Herr P.C. Plod
Sergeant	Woyzeck
Showman	Doctor
Doctor	Tavern Keeper
Jew	Texas Tim
Karl, the idiot	Grandmother
Landlord	Princess Anastasia
Two apprentices	The Little Drummer
Two men	Boy
Marie	
Margret	
Grandmother	
Kathe	
Three girls	

Western Mail, November 28th, 1977

Tim Brassell

Describes 9 separate locations

Quote from Mik Flood about how theatre is created – process as important as the product

Dates of performance – 5th – 12th December (excluding the 12th)

The Audience Interview

- Described it as a Junk-show
- Environments – how to tell story?
- Spaces already animated
- Presenting Process – living arts Centre
- Seen no where else in Britain

South Wales Echo, 8th December 1977

- Green fairy floss
- Mushy green peas
- Hot chestnuts
- Tavern – disco and interval drink
- (murder weapon acquired)

Daily Telegraph, 12th December 1977

- Barber's shop – invited on stage for a shave
- Tavern – rowdy rock concert, invited to dance

Rehearsals began on the 21st November for two weeks in the space. This contravenes some documents that stipulate three weeks.

Working from the script I have concluded roughly which scenes took place where. These are as follows:

Barbers shop – scenes 1- 4
 Fairground – scenes – 5 -6
 Barracks – scenes – 6 – 9
 Doctors – scenes – 10 – 15
 Tavern – scenes – 16 – 17
 Pawnshop – scenes – 18 – 19
 Lake and guillotine – scenes – 20 – 24

If the piece ran from 7.30pm – 10pm I have worked out the rough times, these are as follows:

7.30 – 7.45 Barbers shop

7.50 – 8.05 Fairground

8.10 – 8.25 Barracks

8.30 – 8.45 Doctors

8.50 – 9.05 tavern

interval – 15 minutes

9.20 – 9.35 pawnshop

9.40 – 10pm Lake and guillotine

This allows for 15 minutes per scene plus 5 minutes transition time to each scene (possibly a bit too long)

What happened in the walking sections?

John Hardy said the scenes were short, others said they were too long...??

February 1978
Woyzeck in Cardiff
Chris Stuart reviews the latest from Pip Simmons
Pages 28 – 29

[...] a significant indicator of the way in which fringe groups, and their receiving theatres, are modifying their ways of working. Rising costs and the seemingly spreading decline of audiences to turn out to catch groups as they pass through on at most, three-night stands with shows that are portable and short, are among the factors prompting reappraisal (1978, p. 28)

Woyzeck – only show Pip Simmons did in Britain in 1977

New style of playing
New type of working relationship – gradually being established

Buchner's text – used as a source
Vaguely drawn characters
Outline of a plot
Seven clearly differentiated scenes
Powerful, binding idea – Woyzeck hounded to a humiliating death by his own, pitiful naiveté and by chilling human cruelty.

Each chosen location specially developed to meet its specific dramatic purpose – how??

- Lake - flames shooting up from the water's surface as a backdrop

Audience moves between scenes/'sets', *goaded and cajoled by the performers, bribed with candyfloss, souvenir tee shirts, chestnuts and drink.

'Members of Cardiff theatre groups, costumed and to some extent scripted, act as spectators and stand among the genuine ones' (1978, p. 28)

* Some scenes seat audience in rows – presumably the Barber's
Others - actors and audience are thrown together

- At the end – audience stand at the foot of the guillotine with a sense of complicity and then troupe off amid the *souvenir salesmen.

Repetitiveness of some of the performance techniques – the obsession with nudity, the revue-style caricature and so on – but the conception and its realisation carry such originality and conviction that they scorn nit-picking pedantry.

- The scenes look, smell, and feel real
- Constructed upon an imagination of extraordinary breath

This Woyzeck lays down its own terms of reference, houses them in scenes of breathtaking verisimilitude and invites its packed, gaping audience to partake of the ensuing melee and to profit from the enveloping vitality (1978, p. 29)

Five weeks working in London

Final two weeks of rehearsal and preparation in Cardiff

Ran for two weeks

Almost every wing of the arts centre complex fell prey to the project's needs

£7000 (half from Pip Simmons, half from Chapter – WAC) – both sides reflect optimistically on the co-operative experience.

Mik Flood – submitted plans to WAC for four similar projects

- The People Show
- IOU
- Waste of Time
- Pip – ‘Possibility for further development’

A number of vivid moments stand out in the memory: of Woyzeck clawing his way through the crowds of drinkers in the tavern in a desperate attempt to find Marie; of four seated doctors closing their chairs in on Woyzeck in unison as he is forced to eat endless plates of peas; of Woyzeck clutching a teddy bear and gazing fearfully into outer space after discovering Marie's infidelity; of the ragged old aunt's story of the boy who travelled to the stars, only to find that they were tiny golden gnats stuck to a solid sky (*Audience*, Issue 10, January 1978: 5).

Pictures:

Lake – Drum Major and Marie in ‘The Murder’ scene

Woyzeck and the Doctor in ‘The Doctors’ scene

Woyzeck and company in ‘The Barber Shop’ scene

The Barber's scene had 5 performers

Murder – 2 performers

Doctors – 2 performers (plus more, see above quote)

Clive Barker

Pip Simmons in Residence

Theatre Quarterly

1979 – 2 years after Woyzeck was staged

Opens with a statement about ‘the emergence of a ‘circuit’ of arts centres in Britain – new possibilities to small-scale companies previously faced with the alternative of basing themselves on a single venue, or of touring their work without a close or continuing relationship with any specific locality or performance space.

Financial cuts

‘major innovation’

WE - 4 venues – seemed to happen as a result of Woyzeck and Masque if the red death.

2 week playing period – 3 week Cardiff

2/3 week making period in venue

The significance of the project lies in the questions it raises about the role of the presenting venues in relation to the production product, the new approach to the problems caused by the grinding fatigue of extended touring, and the extension of mutual involvement in both areas with the raising of job satisfaction and, consequently the standards of performance. (1979, p. 17)

Dissatisfaction with Arts Council

- Mik Flood
- “Bums on seats mentality”

Involvement of place in the product, no job satisfaction in the touring venue

Flood – great fear of becoming institutionalized

Arts centres were set up because they provided a venue for a different kind of art to be shown – one established theatres couldn’t host. Page 18

Companies benefit from being in a place for a long period of time

The word project used – rather than show/performance

Woyzeck had 30 staff members involved from Chapter
Plus twenty post grads from Sherman

*hot chestnuts were sold during execution scene

*dirty postcards sold during the show

venue’s role was more than selling tickets! – process of making theatre

The space and the audience

‘Woyzeck’ – environmental productions

‘assaulting the building’

chapter spaces were transformed

Simmons states that there was a ‘narrative progression through the rooms’ (18)

Reedited play

Progression from one room to another dictated how we would cut it up

Each scene was self contained

Band playing in the interval - tavern

Naturalness to it

Direct participation

Simmons – ‘Theatre is essentially a live performance’ (18)

Create an experience in space

Flood states, 'Woyzeck questioned the whole of the audience because we shoved them around through nine spaces and the line between voyeurism and being an audience became a very thin one' (Flood in Barker, 1979, p. 19)

21 – use of multimedia

Roderic Leigh claims that 'Woyzeck existed because there was a producer' (22)

Watching out for Woyzeck

Eric Shorter

January 1978

Mentions a 9pm climax – wrong?

'the hero or anti hero is tottering indignantly across a jetty ... over a backyard pond. Round its edges we gather, shivering but amazed...'

- flaming torches plunges into the pond

- Did not bother about the poetry of Buchner's lines
- What attracted them was the theme of a man who is born a victim
- He smiles politely, well mannered, never makes a fuss, lacks the courage of his convictions
- Wide and woolly interpretation
- Decisively anti-intellectual
- Audience shunted about

No ready answer from cast for what it's about

- theatre – Barber's shop – sing song
- Seated
- two or three girls invite spectators in the front row to go up for a shave
- Woyzeck – easily intimidated
- Dreaded embarrassment
- When goaded – angry – seemed foolish
- After the barber's shop interlude, with songs and drums to announce the pathetic hero's call-up into the army – auditorium – cinema – fairground show
- Woyzeck is again bullied and made to gaze upon his wife's sexual disloyalty
- Attempt to embarrass us
- Woyzeck – appear in each scene (elaborate settings) stooping meekly towards the guillotine. Christ like innocence and suffering
- 2 ½ hours long. – contradicts beginning of article- 9pm climax?

John Cumming

December 13th 1977 – immediate response

Woyzeck – Pip Simmons group at Chapter

- Kaleidoscopic framework
- Inn scene – cross between 70s punk and the club pages of 'Stage'

- Disciplined sense of character maintained by performers (19th Century)

Music

Likened to John Hanson?

Rock and music hall

Good old fashioned spectacle

Each space brings/involves the audience into the action in a different – absorbing way

1. voyeurs
2. shop customers
3. patients
4. patrons of a bier keller selling welsh ale

Theme – powerful images – visual and aural – clear and consistent

Some scenes didn't work – too long for example

Rough Theatre

Juxtaposition of popular theatre with Artaudian techniques

The group frees the performer from the demands of a set text

Value of venue and group working together

Woyzeck score conceived through archive material

Scene 1 – speculative timings 7.30pm – 7.45pm

5 performers - taken from (Stuart, C. 1978, p. 29) picture of scene

Scene 1 – ‘The Barber’s shop’ - (Stuart, C. 1978, p. 29) Took place in the theatre which was downstairs?

Re-edited version on front of script for this scene – **scan in and use as text**

‘Firstly, in the theatre proper, is a barber’s shop sing-song’ (Shorter, Eric, 1978).

‘As we take our seats two or three girls invite spectators in the front row to go up for a shave’ (Shorter, Eric, 1978). ‘In the barber’s shop scene I am invited on stage for a shave’ (Shorter, Eric, Daily Telegraph, 1977)

Props/set:

Barber’s shop equipment and chairs (taken from programme)

‘After the barber’s shop interlude, with songs and drums to announce the pathetic hero’s call-up into the army we file out of the auditorium [...]’

Scene 2 – speculative timings 7.50pm – 8.05pm

Scene 2 – ‘The Fairground’ ‘[...] and into a cinema where we are shown not films but a fairground show at which Woyzeck is again bullied and made to gaze upon his wife’s sexual disloyalty’ (Shorter, Eric, 1978).

Props/set:

- pantomime horse
- fairground backdrop (All taken from the programme in the archives)
- toffee apples
- candyfloss (green – taken from South Wales Echo, 8th December 1977)

Peepshows - South Wales Echo, 8th December 1977

Showman – in a top hat (taken from Pip Simmons poster)

Woyzeck – naked chest and revolver to his head

(John Hardy (audience member) claimed that a real gun was used and fired blanks, this is backed up from a note in the archives stating ‘Revolver – to fire blanks’ (author unknown)

Scene 3 – speculative timings 8.10pm – 8.25pm

Scene 3 – ‘The Barracks’ – Gallery/exhibition space

No further information

Scene 4 – speculative timings 8.30pm – 8.45pm

Four performers plus Woyzeck

Scene 4 – ‘The Doctors’ – Artist workshop

“Eat your peas then...Keep it up and cultivate your idée fixe
my thesis, fame!

I shall be immortal...” (hand written on Buchner’s script, speculatively by Pip Simmons)

Woyzeck forced to eat plates of mushy peas: (mushy peas referenced South Wales Echo, 8th December 1977)

[...] four seated doctors closing their chairs in on Woyzeck in unison as he is forced to eat endless plates of peas (*Audience*, Issue 10, January 1978: 5). Where did I find this?

In original script Woyzeck discovers Marie’s infidelity in the Doctor’s scene – scene?

Props/Set:

- Oscilloscopes
- Lab equipment (taken from programme)
- Medicine ball

In space between scenes? - [...] Woyzeck clutching a teddy bear and gazing fearfully into outer space after discovering Marie's infidelity [...] (*Audience*, Issue 10, January 1978: 5)

Scene 5 – speculative timings 8.50pm –9.05pm

Scene 5 – ‘The Tavern’ – The Bar

Band playing -

In the tavern scene, a rowdy rock concert, I am invited to dance’ (Shorter, Eric, Daily Telegraph, 1977)

Inn scene – cross between 70s punk and the club pages of ‘Stage’ (Cumming, J. 1977)

‘[...] Woyzeck clawing his way through the crowds of drinkers in the tavern in a desperate attempt to find Marie [...]’(*Audience*, Issue 10, January 1978: 5)

Interval - *speculative timings 9.05pm –9.15pm – in the bar*

Scene 6 - speculative timings 9.20pm –9.35pm

Scene 6 - The Pawnshop - Loading dock of the theatre

Murder Weapon acquired – (South Wales Echo, 8th December 1977)

Scene 7 - speculative timings 9.40pm –10.00pm
Drum Major and Marie + Woyzeck

Scene 7 – ‘The Murder’ and Guillotine? – The manmade lake, yard

Audience bribed with hot chestnuts, T. Shirts and Dirty postcards by souvenir salesmen.

of the ragged old aunt's story of the boy who travelled to the stars, only to find that they were tiny golden gnats stuck to a solid sky (*Audience*, Issue 10, January 1978: 5).

Turning the Spotlight on the People script

Stationary archive: Boxes, Kerrie, music, set up – One word spoken, music (calm into rush) 2min

Personification of venue: Long speech at microphone – no music? recorded sound (speech – calm into rush spoken) 5min

Secrets: Music and reveal of boxes – slow, no words (calm) 2min

Recap: frantic recap of 1994 with picnic speech and then by itself (rush into calm) 6min

Culture: Hard-core music, dancing, spoken words, recorded sounds (rush) 5.50min

Embodying the archive: Placing on boxes and twenty years (calm) 2min
= 23 minutes

Script

Boxes set up I am behind the boxes. I slide out between the boxes.

I pause and then when it changes to the Friend's theme tune I slide out and I begin organising the boxes into a semi circle.

I move to the microphone and I say:

2014

It is an honour to welcome you all here this evening. How exciting, though I must say I feel a great sense of responsibility to entertain you. I will try with conviction, because I believe in that for an audience. I will not waver in that conviction. You have put your trust in me and I vow to you I shall repay that trust with unstinting service and dedication to this night and this theatre. And I shall not rest until, once again, the destinies of our people and our theatres are joined together again, in victory at the next festival. Theatre in its rightful place.

1994

(pre-recorded)

It is an honour to lead this Party. I accept it with humility, with excitement and with a profound sense of the responsibility upon me. I joined this Party through conviction, because of what I believed it would do for our country. I have not wavered in that conviction. You have put your trust in me and I vow to you I shall repay that trust with unstinting service and dedication to our Party and our country. And I shall not rest until, once again, the destinies of our people and our Party are joined together again, in victory at the next General Election. Labour in its rightful place.

(Recorded)

**24/03/1996 - Prelude
Alone and centre stage**

She looks into the audience, leans towards it as though about to communicate – but somehow she can't articulate

She's trying to remember.

I (pause) remember (pause) I (pause) remember (pause) I (pause) remember (pause) (slow and methodical)

Kerrie moves to the microphone and begins to speak:

I remember, it was October 1994. I was to meet a lot people that night. I had to make a good impression. What if they didn't like me, what if I never saw them again? I remember feeling the pressure. I brought out all the stops. I brought, I brought out, I brought out the... I entertained them with [...] and [...]. I offered drinks and snacks and there were speeches of thanks and gratitude. I watched and I listened. I made them feel special and welcome. I made them want more. Did I single handily make them come back? I can't be sure. I'm sure I didn't, but I damn well tried to make an impression.

I opened up, I revealed. All sorts of people met me. I had baited breath. They had baited breath. Some thought I would fail. You're in the wrong place they'd say.

Who was I to be? Who would I become? They were all coming to see me, and they had high expectations. There was a sense of anticipation in the air. I was excited, they were excited. I dressed up.

People mingled, people were excited – you know? What I said, what happened within me mattered. So you know, I started to get more confident. I grew. I could be funny, provocative, I could think bigger, I attracted people. People wanted to see me, be around me.

But, then, well people aren't content if you stay the same. They want you to grow, change. Be more challenging. More provocative. You can't decide on an identity and stick to it. That identity gets pushed and challenged and one day you wake up and you don't know who you are anymore. And you have to reinvent your self again and again and what happens within you, you don't know if it's good anymore. You have your good years and your bad years. And those bad years, they stand out more, the good years are ignored.

I kept on trying, I kept on pushing. I wanted to please, I wanted to be important, I was expected to make a difference, I was expected to change things and keep on challenging. It wasn't OK to simply stay the same and stick to an identity. I had to keep on pushing. I had to be more creative, more innovative, more cutting edge, less cutting edge, more inclusive, more for children, more for those emerging, more for established, less for children. Be yourself, be more like them, be less like them, supply Tea and Buns, Bingo, Chess, music, poetry slam, cabaret... People came and went and they left me. They needed me. They didn't need me. Who am I? You can't keep on changing to the point of no return to who you are supposed to be.

Make more money. Be more successful. Be more business like, you keep on trying. And keep on doing what you've been doing and keep on changing what you've been doing. People expect to see something within me that changes them, see the world differently. I can't always offer that. I want to be at the forefront. I want to keep on changing. To fit in

with whom you are, what you want. We can do that. But do we ever really know what's happening?

And then you think - well where do I fit in the grand scheme of things...

City Life plays out as I return to the boxes and methodically turn them around to reveal writings on the boxes – Secrets, things to reveal etc

I pick up a box and begin to rotate it as a rewind sound blasts out and I respond to the music.

1994 recap scene comes on. I run around and embody 1994, using signs as signposts into past events. **Do you remember our picnic in Hampshire? We saw swans that day ... and ducks. You were wearing that silly straw hat and reading a kitsch book about homes and gardens. We had a photograph of the two of us, do you remember that? Miles of unspoilt fields stretched behind us. My hair was blowing in the wind and you rested your head on my shoulder. We had a wicker basket full of homemade food wrapped in foil, and crisps, and wine, and French bread, even straw mats – how very posh and organised. I opened up a bottle of champagne; you cowered, thinking I would hit you with the popped cork. It probably wasn't real champagne. Were we celebrating?**

We all stood at the viewpoint – we had such high hopes. Do you remember? We strolled through the woods; you collected sticks like a small boy would. He smoked. We found that tree that had a cluster of snails on it - do you remember that? I took a picture of you all, and you sat on the floor, below everyone else. The sky was bright blue that day. We all looked so carefree. We were able to switch off that day. Well as much as that's possible. We of course talked shop. But for once I didn't have to think about promoting and raising money. You didn't have to think about the next venture... we didn't have to think about reviews, strategies of engagement, or getting it right this time. It was our day. The four of us. We looked in that antique shop – it had dusty books outside. We couldn't afford anything in there, but told ourselves that one day we would come back and buy something ludicrously expensive. We never did of course. You pondered our life together whilst looking over the bridge into the river – do you remember? The sun reflecting in the water....

Bird song into traffic noise - **It felt different then. Sure, we had to make ends meet. We had to prove ourselves time and time again. Some of those reviews....do you remember? "A rather hap hazarded mix and tenuous connections, the worst of fringe theatre...what was that one – it breathes in the colour and stroke of the paint on the theatre sign or something. Haa - A welcoming refuge for those brave enough to cross the Euston Road. Hilarious cock and bull story – the cockroach piece, remember that? our ninth show, ninth... You were in Isla's Light – exemplary skills you had!**

It all felt so official didn't it: Do you agree to present, promote, organise, provide, manage and produce dramas, dance, operas, films, broadcasts, concerts, musical pieces, entertainments, exhibitions, tutorials, seminars, courses and workshops, whether on any premises of the Company or elsewhere? Such a lot. We did it though. Us.

Then there was the flood, do you remember that.... It all felt like it was coming to an end then.

That picture of the four of us. Turning the spotlight on the people was the caption. We tried to look cool – but really we were shitting ourselves! We wanted to make a difference!

Culture song blasts out **It all seems so long ago... young, happy days.** Kerrie packs away the history and removes the box. She picks up glow sticks from a box and begins dancing frantically. **Let me show you a magic trick** is heard and Kerrie begins to pick up boxes and place them in the centre of the semi-circle. She plays with the boxes, as if hiding something underneath. Kerrie then picks up documents and holds them out for the audience to see. **Now you see it, now you don't** plays out and each time Kerrie gets rid of the documents in each of the boxes.

Kerrie proceeds to dance erratically whilst saying some of the following: other texts to include.

We used to call him the man who couldn't stop working.

Totally ordinary guy

Without that evidence there is no case

"No-one has even scratched the surface of this case. They should look at the failures of social services and police (in Gloucestershire in the 1970s and 1980s)

"Social services had 300 missing files and 100 missing girls. (There were two girls from Jordan's brook children's home who were making a living as prostitutes from 25 Cromwell Street.)"

A devastating scandal

1,400

delayed too long

You can't just click your fingers and hope it will go away. It all needs to be thrashed out - <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-south-yorkshire-28951883>

"I should say I'm shocked, but I'm not really.

At the end of the music a snippet of Zombie is played and Kerrie begins to step into the boxes with the documents in them. Kerrie walks toward the audience and then turns out and begins to walk towards the rest of the boxes. Handle with care is written on the back of the boxes. She slumps into a heap as the music fades and twenty years is played out.

If we were sent back with a time machine, even 20 years, and reported to people what we have right now and describe what we were going to get in this device in our pocket — we'd have this free encyclopedia, and we'd have street maps to most of the cities of the world, and we'd have box scores in real time and stock quotes and weather reports, PDFs for every manual in the world ... You would simply be declared insane.

But the next 20 years are going to make this last 20 years just pale. We're just at the beginning of the beginning of all these kind of changes. There's a sense that all the big things have happened, but relatively speaking, nothing big has happened yet. In 20 years from now we'll look back and say, well, nothing really happened in the last 20 years.

As D:Ream plays out lights fade.

Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales script

Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales weaves a narrative of Chapter's first decade, including an account of its foundation, Pip Simmons's production of *Woyzeck* and its present day reality, and begs the question: Can place be evoked through document(ary) remain and memories? Does place hold memories that if displaced are lost? Can a constructed site become a container

of sorts for evoking a sense of (another) place? And what is the impact of the process of addressing such questions on me as a performance maker?

Whispers, Echoes and Tall Tales score

(roughly 7min for each “chapter”) Chapter 1 is the moment before stepping into the archive.

Chapter 1. The spaces of chapter are mapped out in chalk⁹⁴.

Built within the doorway is an “archive room” constructed from cardboard boxes. The audience enter “Chapter”.

The audience are ushered inside and told to gather in the cinema. Once they are inside they see and hear a sfx of a typewriter and the words “Cardiff needs an arts centre and Cardiff must have one” are projected onto a black screen with white writing.

Music - Kerrie crashes through the boxes and begins to build the spaces of Chapter.

A voice-over begins here as Kerrie begins to rebuild the gap in the box wall. (or perhaps build the box square?

Voice over (VO):

Stand still for a moment. Look at your surroundings. Where are you?

Must I remind you why you are here? You know, right?

Do you ever feel instantly attached to somewhere ... Entwined in the labyrinth of a building, the fabric, the material, the atmosphere? Unsure of how you got there but know you don't want to leave...

Whispered: The walls they can tell stories, you know? Layered fingerprints are left behind, trace them and eventually you will find the source.

But sometimes they are erased.

Not erased, just missing.

Presumed dead.

Stories untold resonate through all of us. We cannot forget our own reason for being here. We cannot forget the reason for being here. We cannot forge the reason for being here.

This is a story known. This is a story not known. This is a story experienced by many. This is a story not experienced by you.

⁹⁴ Chalk is something that is temporary and creates a dust, which is a link to the archive (see Steadman 1998). Through constructing a space in chalk I am suggesting that it is temporary through the chosen material. It is not physical walls, but rather a 2D floor plan that can easily be changed and erased. The audience can also see into the other spaces, even though I am suggesting that they don't exist yet.

You're here; it's just you now. This story is for you... (1.43 min)

Kerrie pulls out an instruction sheet (Live)

In a moment the story will begin. Or perhaps it is already over.

In a sense you are free to roam... but please be aware of your limitations. The art work happens in strict places after all.

In a moment the story will begin. Or perhaps it is already over.

Kerrie takes a box covered in chalk dust. Kerrie blows the dust of the box and underneath is written **Chapter 1.**

The space is dimly lit.

Still in darkness is a snippet of an interview with Chris and Mik. (Audience stand in the dark listening for a moment)

The lights come up - Kerrie assess the spaces – at this stage the audience are on the outer edges of the spaces looking in as Kerrie makes it come to life through lights coming on as she enters each mapped out space.

(28 sec) Lights come up slightly and Kerrie is seen preparing for the performance – she gets changed. She removes some debris from the space. She cleans the floor. She goes to each space that is dimly lit and draws more objects in the spaces. She removes dust covered sheets from the spaces.

(1min) Steel works – debris.

(2.27) Kerrie walks around the “corridors”

(2.40min) She removes the “Chemicals” from the theatre space and takes them to the doctor’s scene and bar.

(3.13) Artist studio – enter into
Cinema – enter into
Theatre – enter into

Kerrie prepares for the Barbershop scene.
Signs a lease

(4min)

Chapter 2 is the beginning of entering Chapter. It shows a moment from *Woyzeck* but through the lens of Chapter's history. It is the first signifier that the two stories are mixed together...

Audience are free to enter into the first space as it becomes illuminated. Each space follows the narrative of *Woyzeck* with moments of Chapter's past interspersed throughout. This first space is the "THEATRE", which also means it is the Barbershop scene and will contain moments about Chapter's beginning/construction.

Chapter 2:

Through recycling some physical moments from Playing (at) *Woyzeck* I represent the rehearsal of *Woyzeck* and the beginnings of Chapter: Perhaps adapt this, shaving foam and razor, lipstick, towel. Repetitive movements ensue.

Kerrie applies lipstick, shaving foam, and towels face - repeats.

Recycle moments from scene I have done before

Must look neat and presentable. This is it now. Must be taken seriously. Must present ourselves as we want to look. Sit down. It's time for a shave. It'll take the edge off. What will people think? They'll mock you, they'll mock us! Who do we think we are?! I am being humiliated, I am humiliating. I'm in the hot seat. I am taking this to the next step. It will be a success. I will make it a success.

Not so fast. Not so fast

Pause

Interview snippet – Chris Kinsey. Kerrie repeats the movements above and then sweeps away debris around her.

Kerrie takes money from Barber shop scene and moves it to Pawnshop. Give money out to audience.

Kerrie stops – Write down political groups in the spaces between. Erase. Move to another. Banners – Workers education association, Shelter, campaign for homosexual equality.

Let's take a moment and see where we are. What we have achieved? It's all worth noting. Worth knowing.

No time to stop now, much to do. Much to see, much more happening....

Chapter 3 again mixes up the stories – it uses a screen as the symbol for the cinema and shows the audience the "construction" of Chapter. Through happening behind the screen it represents that the space is not yet open to the public.

Chapter 3: Audience are ushered into the cinema, which is also the fairground scene and pavilions in the park, construction of chapter

Kerrie is behind a screen with a silhouette effect. Kerrie plays a circus ringmaster and address the audience:

(music) leading into circus, fairground music

(live) *Big event coming up! Roll up, roll up!*

It's free

There's no such thing.

It'll never work – who needs it

We need it!

Bunch of hippies!

Queue up and see for yourselves.

(live) *Come on in – there's a spectacle to be had.*

This is where it all started you know? Can you feel it – the sense of camaraderie? We're all gathered here in this one space and we look to the future. Open your eyes and come into a world constructed just for you.

Peep into a world

Taste the sweetness on offer

Delve into the debauchery and let your senses be tantalized.

(V0) (reverberating)

Who do they think they are?

Parading themselves with such audacity

What is it all for?

It shouldn't be allowed. What will people think?

Wasting money – throwing it around like no one's business.

Do you see – something has to be done?

Do you not feel uncomfortable about this?

It's up to you to stop it

Late night films being shown, what is this place?

(VO) Woyzeck and performances shown at Chapter with Kerrie physicalizing Woyzeck

Collapse...

Scene 4 shows Chapter in full swing – it is therefore years into its opening. There is disillusionment in the air.

Chapter 4: Gallery, Barracks and an exhibition of cigarette machine as temporary art

The lights go dim and the audience are ushered to the next space.

The space has 1 plinth in it; the plinth has a plate of mushy peas on it

(VO)

Construct – destruct. That’s what we do here. We install, we uninstall. It’s all temporary. Build it into what you want it to be. Kerrie builds “art” out of mushy peas, she takes it down, builds it again, takes it down, builds it again etc.

*The big kiss of death
Work your balls off! Put everything in the back of a transit van.
Hump it around – because you have to!
Otherwise no next quarter grant for you!*

Facts and figures of Chapter...

We’ve had a drop in theatre takings! It’s a bums on seat mentality! At least the bar sales have increased. All those pints drunk here! Wait, I have the figures for that somewhere... Massive loss in the gallery too! The cinema has made a profit. Come on, the Welsh Arts Council has all but doubled our grant. But we are making a loss on artistic work. We have to rethink of ways to make our artistic practices stronger.

This is a depressing story of one man’s struggle against a fate which has all the cards stacked against him....

Inevitably it will develop systems that lead to the smooth running of the place....

There needs to be a much more active response to self-generated work, putting on rather than bringing in...

Snippet of interview with Dave Southern – as someone that entered Chapter as a young and idealistic person.

*I have a great fear of becoming institutionalised. The reason why places like this sprang up was because there were not the possibilities for the kind of art we were interested in to be presented in established theatres. Places like ours are in danger of going that way, once they get smooth administration. Once you have responsibility for the taxpayers’ money, you have to do things right and above board that are totally reconcilable with your financial masters. **(Kerrie with wads of money that she stuff into clothes)** But at the same time we want to do other things as well. As we should, but so many arts centres aren’t. They’re just like vast waiting rooms in Swiss cancer clinics.*

Scene 5 shows a change of Chapter, as Mik Flood implements a new way of working.

Chapter 5: Artist's workshop, Doctors, and change of policy

Sfx of marching and drumming.

Kerrie carries the peas over from the exhibition space and begins to eat them as if being forced – This scene focuses on how Chapter changing.

Kerrie plays the role of the doctor (Arts council)

Kerrie plays the role of the patient (Pip Simmons and Chapter)

The doctor wears a white coat and assesses the situation, feeding the patient mushy peas.

The patient receives the mushy peas.

Nigel Watson interview about soldier's treatment perhaps?

(in straight jacket) (Live and at the same time eating peas) *When you're poor like us sir, it's the money, the money! If you haven't got the money ... I mean you can't bring the likes of us into the world on decency. We're flesh and blood too. Our kind doesn't get a chance in this world or the next.*

Doc: So far they have not played one performance in this country

Patient: Our first decision was that during 1977/78 we would commit more of our times to the creative process.

Doc: It was clear that there had been no intention on the part of this group to deceive the Arts Council.

Patient: Of course Chapter is also committed to providing a broader context for contemporary theatre and performance work. This means being a venue for "imported" small scale touring works...The way this usually works is that a theatre group will come to Chapter with an already-prepared "product" ... this is satisfactory for certain types of theatre – it is however far from satisfactory for the sort of theatre where the process and environment for presentation is integral to the final product....

(VO with shuffling paper sfx) Cross out. There's a curse on this place. Do you see... cross out. Where the toadstools are. Cross out. Three days and three nights. Cross out.

Can you hear it? Cross out. There's something moving

You are created from dust, would you be more than dust?

Everything's gone dark

The voice comes out of the wall. Don't you hear anything?

Even money rots

(live) There must be another way of working.... that involves place in the product.

(audio)

(Kerrie sits slumped)

Kerrie comes out from behind the screen and a disco ball switches on. (This is a moment from *Woyzeck* and represents the hopes and expectation of Chapter)

*This is a tale of a boy who travelled in search of the stars
They shone so fiercely, so brightly, so indefinitely
He knew he had to reach them, touch them, wear them, claim them as part of his own
He set off into the abyss, into the unknown, being guided by the light that the stars provided
the boy on his lonely journey
They glistened and twinkled and shone – so welcoming, so inviting*

*But as the boy reached closer he notices that some of these stars seemed to switch off
One blink and they were gone. No light to guide him, so invitation to entice him
In the darkness the boy searched for endless days upon endless days
grasping for light, for air as he clung to the darkness that enveloped him
and then in the distance he saw a blinking light and the boy struggled his tired body towards
it
Only to find that it was a tiny gnat and seemed to grimace at the boy
He turned around and the whole sky was lit up with tiny golden gnats, stuck to a solid sky.*

(disco ball off)

Scene 6 is Chapter's first birthday – it is not presenting things in a linear way. It is also the Tavern scene of *Woyzeck* and acts as an “interval” where the audience can have a drink.

Chapter 6: Bar, Tavern, First Birthday

Party – edible rainbow, Party hats, coloured food, Drinks are served

There's a party to be had. Go in, socialise. Enjoy yourselves.

“Happy First Birthday” (Banner) drops down (Balloons descend?)

You deserve this. Have a drink.

Go on have a tippie

Hey you, drink up. Why isn't the world made of booze? Drink, will you!

*Brandy is the drink for me,
Brandy gives you spunk*

(VO) It's been a whole year. Can you believe it? When I first saw you after you had changed I knew I had to be inside you. Enveloped by you. You had so much promise. I had to learn more about you. I know you now. I still can't get enough. I need you in my life.

Time for a break - party! Enjoy yourself – (music – punk, rock) (contemporary music here)

“Last orders ladies and gentlemen” (music)

“Time at the bar” (music)

“leave now” (music)

Music plays – Kerrie erratically gives out drinks.

Scene 7 is a mix between Chapter apparently wasting money but also the positive change that they made with bringing in shows such as *Woyzeck*.

Chapter 7: Loading dock, Pawnshop and changing Chapter

Too much money has been wasted.

On what?

Too much money...

On what?

Fancy designs and glossy covers. You think that can cover it up? This is not suitable.

I am not trying to cover anything up

Liar

What is this stuff...? What is it all for?

You're too polished. You said you would never be that. You said you didn't want to be that!

Who are you to say what it is, what I am?!

Look...there it is...take it...

Pick it up. Take it. It's for you.

This place has opened doors

This place has offered events that would otherwise not be seen

It's a social space

It's a cultural hub

Where are we? Let's take a look at our journey so far. What we have seen? Can you feel it yet?

Do you need reminding why you are here?

C.K – we have been told quite firmly that Chapter mustn't expand physically much more in the next year because of the cut backs and things, and we probably won't have very sympathetic ears if we want to start building out in the playground

Group interview snippet - Chris Jordan, Sheila Burnett and Mik Flood. (audio)

Chapter 8 focuses on the founders leaving – therefore a big change in Chapter. It is mixed up with the murder scene as a symbol of change.

Chapter 8 : Yard, murder scene, founders leaving - the chalk outline is of the skull.

Kerrie walks around the edge of the skull – picking up pictures from out of the water, looks at them and drops them on the floor.

You want these? Yea you want to buy it don't you. Want to own it. To possess this? ("Dirty postcards" replaced with fragments of pictures from Chapter's past) Do you see what this is? Can you see it, yet?

You've done it now. It's done. It's over. They know. They see what you have done. It's time to leave.

I have done all I can. We have done all that we can. It's up to you now. Be wise.

Music

You have an opportunity here. Take it.

Drown me in my sorrow and self-pity. Take me away from this place and surrender me. I am not here. It's over.

Chapter 9 is a return to the present day, and a return for the audience to be outside of the archive, looking at it, rather than being within it. It is therefore a moment to think about what the archive has offered.

Chapter 9: Present day

Final scene is within the boxes. Audience look through gaps in the structure of the boxed archive room at Kerrie attempting to make sense of the archive documents.

She is surrounded by archive material. Soft music plays as fragments of paper begin floating in the air.

The music stops and Kerrie walks out into the audience (Darkness).

(VO) Dankness in Cardiff. A remorseless drizzle. the Avant-garde is afoot. It is nine o'clock at night. And after trailing round the Chapter Arts Centre in the wake of the Pip Simmons' Theatre Group, the audience finds itself clustered in the puddled darkness of a car park (sfx of rain)

Ends.

Opening: entering the archive. Creating a sense of place

Chapter 1 – preparation

Chapter 2 – sense of what was happening

Chapter 3 – Stagnated

Chapter 4 – Change is afoot

Chapter 5 – Party – celebrate year

Chapter 6 – Freedom and change in motion

Chapter 7 – Christine leaving/coming back to Cardiff

Chapter 8 – Creating a new archive